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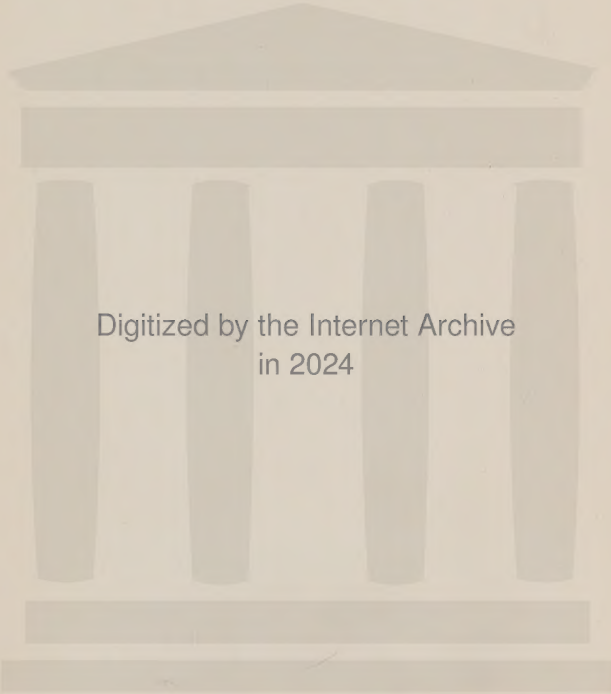
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*A Study of Radical Policies
and Tactics*

By


DAVID J. SAPOSS

Brookwood Labor College

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PREFACE

INTERNAL strife within the labour movement seems to be as eternal as the movement itself. In common with all social institutions, labour organisations are constantly experiencing differing degrees of factional struggles. Those divisions that arise out of the disagreements between the radical and conservative elements naturally centre around ideologic issues. Since the latter are generally in control the task of the radicals is to devise policies and tactics that will enable them to replace the conservatives. Consequently much of the thought and energy of the radicals has been directed towards the study and application of modes of procedure for winning the labour movement to their beliefs. But, as the effective opposition, they have seldom agreed among themselves as to which policies and tactics would best further their cause. Indeed, the chief controversies among the radicals in the labour movement have been as to what methods would most effectively advance the attainment of their objective. And invariably these quarrels have eclipsed principles, finally bringing about their re-adaptation to suit the type of policies and tactics momentarily advocated. Similarly, these differences over modes of procedure have usually been the rock upon which the radicals have split into factions and sects.

This study, therefore, does not concern itself with the numerous radical ideologies. These philosophies are referred to only as they relate to one or the other modes of procedure. Likewise, the usual manipulations and manœuvres characteristic of mass organisations and resorted to in most social relationships are also touched

upon only incidentally. Hence, the prime task undertaken herein is to analyse in their historical and theoretical perspective the various strategical methods used by the radicals in the course of their trade union activities. This book is, therefore, a discussion of the policies and tactics arising from the dual struggle of the radicals, on the one hand against the conservatives and on the other, among themselves.

The writer wishes to express his grateful appreciation to Professor Henry R. Seager of Columbia University for reading the manuscript and making many helpful suggestions. He has also to thank his colleagues, Professor Arthur W. Calhoun and Mildred T. Calhoun, for painstakingly reading the manuscript and making numerous valuable suggestions which have greatly improved its form and substance.

DAVID J. SAPOSS.

Brookwood Labor College,
February, 1926.

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LEFT WING UNIONISM

I. CONFLICTING IDEALS AND PROGRAMMES

IN continental Europe the labour movement was launched and fostered by class conscious radicals. Hence the unions and the labour movements of those countries were from their very inception committed to a working class revolutionary ideology. With them the overthrow of the wage system and the substitution therefor of a new social order was the natural objective. In this country, as well as in England, the early unions and the labour movement were impregnated with the middle class aspiration that each worker, during his lifetime, should become self-employed, either as small manufacturer, merchant or farmer. The German radicals, particularly those who migrated following the 1848 revolution, undertook to counteract the middle class ideology of the American unions by advocating that unions and other labour organisations should subscribe to a class conscious revolutionary philosophy. From the outset their activities in the labour movement centred on this objective. In pursuit of their goal, and for the purpose of winning the unions to their views, the radicals devised policies and tactics which are now described as boring from within and dual unionism. These two salient radical trade union policies and their concomitant tactics were practised simultaneously and interchangeably for a generation before they became distinctly differentiated and pronounced incompatible. Not until the nineties of the last century did they become distilled into full-fledged and rigid doctrines. The manifold events which induced the final crystallisation of these practices into comprehensive rival programmes of procedure date between the Civil War, which marks the beginnings of modern unions and the late 'nineties, when they became

permanent and stable organisations. This chaotic and formative period of modern unionism witnessed the groping uncertainties of the radicals in devising a tactic for furthering their cause. In common with the entire labour movement they oscillated blindly from one tactic to the other as conditions dictated. Only when the modern unions had become permanent and stable organisations did the radicals clarify their views with reference to trade union policies and tactics.

The first outcroppings of radical dual union symptoms date to the attempts of the German radicals to bore from within in striving for endorsement for the first modern radical labour political party. Previously there had existed labour political parties which subscribed to middle class ideologies. The German radicals, who at the end of the Civil War dominated the German labour movement, which at this time paralleled the English-speaking movement,¹ undertook in 1867 to organise the first socialist party, called the Social Party. As a threat to the unresponsive unions they declared for dual unionism or "Konkurrenz-Unions". The constitution of the Social Party provided that: "New trade unions should be founded when existing unions decline to affiliate with this organisation" (Schlüter, *Die Internationale in Amerika*, pp. 88, 488). Since this organisation was short-lived, its threat was never enforced. The idea, however, persisted, and matured into dual unionism. During the succeeding two decades it became a common practice for radicals to organise separate unions in order to increase adherents to their cause.

Thus in the summer of 1872 an independent cigar makers' union was formed consisting of a German and a Bohemian branch. Its opposition to the National Cigar

¹ Schlüter, *Die Anfänge der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung in Amerika*, p. 4; Commons and Associates, *History of Labour in the United States*, I, p. 616ff; Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labour*, I, pp. 47, 60-62; Saposs, "The Rôle of the Immigrant in the Labour Movement" in *Amalgamated Illustrated Almanac*, 1924, p. 150ff.

Makers' Union was on the ground that it was too conservative. The crisis of the following year with its consequent unemployment led the rival organisations to fuse.² Similar radical unions, largely led by Germans, with a membership chiefly German, were scattered throughout the country as rivals to the conservative unions. To distinguish themselves from the conservative unions of the respective trades, they generally prefixed to their names the word "progressive". Thus there was the Progressive Tailors' Union, consisting mostly of socialists. In justification of their founding of a separate union "the Progressives claimed that the skilled journeymen tailors were opposed to progressive ideas on account of their better economic situation" (Stowell, *The Journeymen Tailors' Union of America*, p. 85).

These dual and secessionist elements also undertook to organise city central labour bodies, as well as national trade unions. In 1884 the Progressive Cigar Makers' Union of Chicago "took the initiative in organising a new central trade union body. It called upon the unions of the city to secede from the conservative Amalgamated Trades and Labour Assembly and to form a central labour union with a progressive policy. The German unions of metal workers, carpenters and joiners, cabinet makers, and butchers sent delegates. At first the growth of the new central body was slow. One year after its formation the majority of the trade unions in the city were still affiliated with the old central body, but towards the end of 1885 the strength of the rival bodies became considerably less uneven—the Central Labour Union having thirteen unions, mostly German, some of which, however, were the largest in the city, and the Amalgamated Trades and Labour Assembly counting nineteen affiliated unions". The former body came under the influence of the anarchist element, whose mentor was the International Working People's Association, or the so-called "Black International". This

² Schlüter, *Die Anfänge der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung in Amerika*, p. 481.

organisation was founded by the anarchists in opposition to the socialist International Workingmen's Association, popularly designated as the First International.

The Chicago radicals, now rapidly becoming anarchists and forerunners of modern syndicalism, even attempted to organise national unions. One, the Metal Workers' Federation Union of America, was actually launched in 1885 with headquarters in St. Louis (*Ibid.*, II, pp. 387-393). The socialists also aspired to organise national unions, a case in point being the Progressive Cigar Makers' Union, which was formed in 1881, by secession from the International Cigar Makers' Union. The split turned "on the policy of the international officers, which was to support candidates of the existing parties who pledged themselves to the prohibition of tenement house work. The socialist element in the union at first tried to block this policy, but carried the fight over into the next election of officers, where it won by electing a socialist president of No. 144. He was, however, immediately suspended by Strasser, the international president, on the ground that he was a manufacturer and consequently ineligible. But the socialists refused to submit either to the suspension of this chosen officer or to the order issued by the international executive board to turn over the funds to the union pending a new election. They formally seceded by assuming the name, Progressive Union No. 1. The Progressive Union grew very rapidly because it took in the tenement house workers and adopted lower dues than those of the International Union. It soon spread outside of New York and thus became in fact, as well as in name, a rival national union to the older organisation. Naturally its membership was recruited from among the socialists and the recent immigrants, who also were largely tenement house workers. Efforts at reconciliation were repeatedly made, and in December, 1885, a small part of the Progressives united with the International" (Commons and Associates, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 396-413; Gompers, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 200-204). The remainder continued to function

independently for a brief period and then threw in their lot with the Knights of Labour.

For the following decade the tactics of the radicals in the labour movement were directed chiefly to boring from within. The socialists and anarchists attempted to capture both the Knights of Labour and the American Federation of Labour. Although the German unions were still the chief source of radical support, their efforts were now ably seconded by the unions of Jewish workers, who were repeating the course of the former by independently organising themselves. The other non-English-speaking immigrant workers also generally followed the leadership of the German radical unionists. The anarchists and socialists exercised considerable influence in both national labour federations. Bitter struggles resulted from their pursuit of ideologic domination whenever they locked horns with the conservatives. Several times the socialists were on the verge of success, but in each instance at the crucial moment they were thwarted,—not always by fair methods. The heated strife and the keen opposition which the radicals encountered can be gleaned from a recital of the salient events that brought on the climax and the rout of the radicals in both national labour federations.

Since most of the anarchist and socialist dual unionists had organised in opposition to the few existing national unions which later sponsored the American Federation of Labour, they naturally turned to the Knights of Labour. Thus they were both boring from within the Knights and gratifying their urge for dual organisations that would supplant the few national unions which thwarted their efforts at permeating the labour movement with their radical doctrines. Nor was this a bad strategic departure, as the Knights were, after 1878, the significant national labour federation. Here was not only a fertile field for agitation and proselyting, but an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of the future labour movement of the country. This hope was not an idle dream, for during its formative period both socialists and anarchists exercised

an influence far out of proportion to their following. They were the two cohesive and articulate groups, led by well-informed and purposive men. In New York the anarchists so dominated the Knights of Labour ideologically that the organisation had a very definite anarchist complexion. The ablest leaders in Chicago and elsewhere were also anarchists. The socialists, too, played a significant rôle. Powderly, the head of the Knights of Labour, and other leaders considered it advantageous to cater to them. The former accepted and displayed on occasion a socialist card. Also when the Knights, in 1883, voted to foster co-operation, they endorsed the socialist ideal then described as "integral co-operation", which signified centralised control of co-operative ventures through socialised ownership by the national organisation of the Knights of Labour.

a. Eclipse of Radical Influence

With the deluge of new members the leaders of the Knights ceased catering to the socialists and anarchists and the influence of these groups was eclipsed and finally checked. The new membership, mostly unskilled Americans from agricultural communities, who by force of circumstances had been obliged to abandon their original pursuits and become wage earners, was not overly responsive to class conscious radicalism. As untrained and inexperienced unionists they wanted impulsive action both in order to better their conditions and blindly to avenge themselves for having been suddenly transformed into workers. The strike was the medium through which they registered their disappointment at having had the normal course of their lives distorted and negated. Those of this element who paused to reflect on their new status and predicament showed little interest in the abolition of capitalism, although they did favour abolition of the wage system. Having ruthlessly been transplanted from middle class walks of life they intuitively and tenaciously held to the ideal of retarding the development of capitalism into

highly concentrated units so that the average worker might, with the aid of his little savings, become a small capitalist. The commitment to the ideal of integral co-operation was revoked and replaced by advocacy and inauguration of decentralised producers' co-operation, whereby a handful of workers might, by combining their savings, jointly become self-employed. Thus socialism and anarchism were relegated to the background. The fatal Haymarket catastrophe of 1886 placed them under an additional handicap. As the general reaction set in against the anarchists and other radicals the leaders of the Knights of Labour took advantage of the situation to curb the influence of the persistent and able socialist and anarchist leadership. Those that were not silenced were expelled, and thus their boring from within activities were nullified.³ This defeat ended the first period of radical boring from within in the Knights of Labour. The next attempt belongs to a later period.

b. Radical Activity in the A. F. of L.

At the same time that the radicals were boring from within the Knights, they were also active in the unions that banded together to found the American Federation of Labour. Since the bulk of the skilled workers from the time of the Civil War into the 'nineties were immigrants, and these unions consisted chiefly of skilled workers, the radicals had a large following within them, and naturally became assertive. But they encountered strenuous opposition from former leading radicals who were now the guiding spirits of the American Federation of Labour. These men, who were chiefly immigrants like Adolph Strasser and Samuel Gompers of the Cigar Makers', or first generation American born like P. J. McGuire of the Carpenters', had experienced an ideologic reorientation in the course of their participation in the labour movement.

³ Powderly, *Thirty Years of Labour*, pp. 271-288; Hillquit, *History of Socialism in the United States*, pp. 293-294;

They were reared in the cradle of radical unionism, receiving their introduction to the labour movement through the immigrant radicals in the 'seventies, but as they advanced to prominence and leadership two events occurred that revolutionised their future course of action and thinking.

In the first place, the labour movement, pursuing its historic response to the dictates of the business cycle, plunged into feverish political and co-operative activity with the downward trend of the curve during the serious business depression of 1873. The socialists recognised this as a most favourable opportunity to "force an entering wedge for socialism into the English-speaking labour movement" (Commons and Associates, *op. cit.*, II, p. 234). The different socialist factions were induced to unite their forces in order to assure more effective action. And they selected the various independent farmer-labour political ventures as the source of operation. For this purpose the Workingmen's Party of the United States was formed in 1875. The disguise was not very helpful, so the name was changed two years later to Socialist Labour Party (Hillquit, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-210, 213-230). These attempts to further the fortunes of socialism through the farmer-labour efforts of American workers at independent political action that cropped out between 1875 and 1888, including the Greenback labour and single tax agitations met with reverses (*Ibid.*, pp. 207-284). The outcome influenced the former radicals who became leaders of the American Federation of Labour.

To a greater extent, however, the future mentors of the Federation were influenced in their new attitude and course of action by the tendency to subordinate the rôle of the union in the labour movement. From its very inception the middle class elements in the labour movement regarded politics and co-operation as the more important agencies for promoting the interests of the workers. Union action was only tolerated as a temporary and undesirable activity. This sentiment pervaded all organ-

isations of American workers through the Knights of Labour period. During the 'seventies a similar concept was injected among the immigrant radicals. Originally the destinies of the class conscious radicals were presided over by the First International, which was imbued with Marxian tenets. Based on observations in England where Marx saw the organised workers functioning through effective unions and consumers co-operatives, this group worked on the theory that the workers must first be securely organised into unions for the protection of their immediate interests. They did not stress co-operation, apparently because it was directed by the American workers towards middle class producers' co-operation which amounted to maintenance of small-scale capitalism. They promulgated the dictum that only when the workers were strongly organised into unions was the time ripe for launching working class political activity. This belief that unions protecting the immediate interests of the workers must form the basic and pivotal rallying point of the labour movement was rationalised into an inexorable dogma. The influential leaders who later gave the American Federation of Labour its distinctive ideology were reared in this school of socialism.

c. Subordinating Unions to Politics

With the mass migration from Germany which was contemporaneous with the 1873 business depression, two new radical elements that differed with the Marxian tactical procedure came into prominence. These were the anarchists and Lassallean socialists. One group of anarchists looked upon unions merely as a vehicle for propagating its cause. The second, led by Johann Most, a recent arrival from Germany, was entirely opposed to unions. A somewhat similar idea was sponsored by the adherents of Ferdinand Lassalle, the brilliant founder of German political socialism. The struggle which ensued between the followers of Marx and those of Lassalle in the socialist ranks was the immediate factor in directing the future

leaders of the American Federation of Labour towards the present type of conservative unionism. In Germany the workers had developed a substantial political movement that even the drastic Bismarck anti-socialist laws could not dislodge, but they had hardly begun the founding of unions. To the followers of Lassalle it appeared, therefore, that unions were a temporary and unimportant agency in protection of the immediate interests as well as in furtherance of the future aspirations of the workers. As the controversy progressed each faction assumed a rather irreconcilable position. The Lassalleans were favoured by conditions. The business depression of 1873 weakened the unions and made the leaders and workers more inclined towards political action. Hence the Marxian socialists yielded temporarily. In the meantime the large immigration from Germany swelled the Lassallean ranks so that they outnumbered the Marxians in the radical organisations. Finally they dominated the Socialist Labour Party.

Victory for the political element led many of the Marxian socialists to abandon the Socialist Labour Party. Those who chose to remain in the labour movement either addressed themselves to organising the unorganised, or to renewed energy in the unions of their trade. In the course of their activity and experience as union leaders and antagonists of the Lassalleans, anarchists, and middle class groups in the labour movement, this Marxian trade union element evolved a new ideology now known as "pure and simple" or "wage conscious unionism". This new trade union philosophy equally repudiated the concepts of American middle class unionism and continental European class conscious unionism of the anarchist and socialist varieties. Instead it modelled after the English unions of that time.

It is highly probable that the Marxians would not have gone to this extreme if the Lassalleans had not featured political action to the exclusion of trade union action, but because of this Lassallean attitude socialism became as obnoxious to the old Marxians as middle class and anar-

chist unionism were. The three groups had one feature in common. They minimised the need of unions for the immediate betterment of conditions. It was their insistence that unions were not only a mere incident in the activities of the workers but were chiefly to be used as propaganda agencies in abolishing the wage system that prejudiced the Marxian trade unionists against their ideals. (Many radical factions still regard unions in that light.) The corollary to this position of the middle class and dominant socialist groups was the advocacy of producers' co-operation and of politics as the vital channels for working class activity. This policy naturally drove the Marxians to the other extreme. From merely at first minimising politics and co-operation they began to condemn these activities entirely in order that trade union action might not be obscured. They saw how a broader programme which included a demand for a new social order consumed the entire attention of the workers in political action and co-operation, thus crowding unions into the background. This undoubtedly is the reason why the leaders of the American Federation of Labour for a long time opposed any form of politics and scoffed at co-operation, featuring only trade union action. If in the early history of the labour movement co-operation and political action had not become unequivocally associated with the advocacy of ultimate ideals to the exclusion of the betterment of immediate conditions, and proposed as a substitute for unions, it is not at all unlikely that the American Federation of Labour leaders would not have developed an uncompromising attitude towards independent political action, and a sceptical indifference towards co-operation. These are vitally contributing causes in explaining why this is the only country with a large industrial population that has neither a substantial working class political party nor co-operative movement. As the struggle raged, so obsessed did the trade union leaders become with their fear that they decried even such

co-operation as was without an ultimate ideal, and warned against ordinary protective labour legislation.

d. Wage Conscious Unionism

Gradually, as a result of this situation, the former Marxian socialists who were now the guiding spirits of the A. F. of L. began to feel, in spite of their sympathies for the larger and more far-reaching aspirations of socialism, that coping with the daily bread-and-butter problems of the workers, such as higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions and union recognition, as well as providing insurance for such misfortunes as death and sickness, were sufficient to tax the ingenuity and energies of the leaders and the movement. As an example they had before them the British unions which had demonstrated that labour organisations pursuing such aims attained stability and immediate satisfactory results. Therefore, they came to hold that union organisation to protect the immediate interests of the workers should be the ideal of the American labour movement. Even so, as former radicals and Europeans, they borrowed considerably from class conscious radicalism. Their European background with its rigid class demarcations, rationalised by contact with radicalism and supported by daily observations of business and industrial development, made them totally scornful of the middle class aspirations to check concentration of capital so that thrifty and frugal workers could in the course of their pursuit of a livelihood become self-employed. They also were aware of the numerous and glaring failures of producers' co-operative undertakings, through which these ideals were to be realised. In common with the class conscious radicals they accepted the existence of a permanent working class and the consequent class struggle concept. On the other hand, they believed it was futile for the workers to dissipate their energies in quarrelling with the wage system by resorting to politics, co-operation, or anarchist organisation in order to eradicate it. They counselled the workers to become

reconciled to their status as a permanent working class in which the average worker was destined to remain a worker. On this basis the workers were to band themselves together into unions in order to protect and promote their interests under the wage system and capitalism. This doctrine is known as "pure and simple" or "wage conscious unionism".⁴

The emphasis on union or economic action coincided with the tactical conceptions of the anarchists, who also attacked political action. Although these differed ideologically from the wage conscious unionists, they supported them as against the socialists. The middle class unionists, who featured both producers' co-operation and independent political action, drew their following from American workers. While this element was influential in the Knights of Labour, it did not function as a co-ordinate unit in the Federation. To the socialists a form of unionism that decried ultimate aspirations for the emancipation of the workers and scorned independent political action was the rankest heresy. It only egged them on to redoubled opposition. Thus they constituted the clean-cut opposition to wage conscious unionism. It was not long before they again locked horns with the conservative unionists.

In New York the socialists were unable to keep on friendly terms with the old established central body of trade unions, the Central Labour Union. This body had, during 1888, fallen under the influence of the Knights of Labour and the conservative trade unions, and, as the socialists charged, of corrupt politicians also. The socialists had therefore organised the Central Labour Federation in February, 1889, which received a charter from the American Federation of Labour. In December, 1889, the Central Labour Federation effected a reconciliation with the Central Labour Union and fused with it. The lukewarmness of the Central Labour Union toward the eight-

⁴ Commons and Associates, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 223-239, 269-290, 306-310; Gompers, *op. cit.*, chap. xix.

hour movement, and principally the suspicion of political corruption drove the socialists for a second time to secession, and in June, 1890, they resurrected the Central Labour Federation. Soon they were given cause to doubt the friendship of the American Federation of Labour, for it refused a charter to the Central Labour Federation on the ground that it had affiliated with itself, besides thirty-eight trade unions, also the section of the Socialist Labour Party. This was indeed a surprise, since the German radicals and socialists considered it a natural procedure for a working class political party to be affiliated with the local trade union central body. With the founding of the first independent socialist party, the Social Party, in 1869, it became the practice for the socialist parties to be represented in the Central Labour Union. The Social Party was represented by a delegate at the German Trade Union Federation of New York—the Deutsche Arbeiter Union. When Section 1 of the International Workingmen's Association was created, it, too, immediately became active as a working class educational body in the German Central Labour Union. At the time of this controversy sixteen city centrals recognised delegates from the respective branches of the Socialist Labour Party. In practically every case these were organisations of German trade unions. The socialists appealed to the Detroit convention of the American Federation of Labour of 1890. Much of the time and most of the interest of the first and second days' sessions were taken up by speeches on the subject. The convention upheld the ruling of its officers.

This reverse did not discourage all the socialists. A large and influential element among them, with the support of socialist unions, still persisted in their efforts to capture the federation. The next test came in 1893. The convention of 1893 is memorable in that it submitted to the consideration of affiliated unions a "political programme". The preamble to the programme recited that the English trade unions had recently launched upon independent politics "as auxiliary to their economic ac-

tion". The eleven planks of the programme demanded: compulsory education; the initiative, a legal eight-hour work day; governmental inspection of mines and workshops; abolition of the sweating system; employers' liability laws; abolition of the contract system upon public work; municipal ownership of electric light, gas, street railway, and water systems; the nationalisation of telegraphs, telephones, railroads, and mines; "the collective ownership by the people of all means of production and distribution"; and the referendum upon all legislation.

The programme was submitted by Thomas J. Morgan, a socialist from Chicago, representing the International Machinists' Union, and received a more than passive support from Gompers and P. J. McGuire. Only one real test vote upon the political programme was had in this convention. It came upon a motion to strike out the recommendation to affiliated unions to give the programme their "favourable consideration". The vote against the recommendation was 1,253 to 1,182. McGuire voted with the majority and Gompers refrained from voting. With this recommendation stricken out, the submission of the programme was carried by the overwhelming vote of 2,244 to 67.

Several other resolutions adopted by the convention of 1893 are of significance in this connection. One of these instructed the Executive Council to bring about an alliance with the farmers' organisations "to the end that the best interests of all may be served". Another resolution renewed the demand for the nationalisation of the telegraph system. Finally there was a declaration in favour of free coinage of silver as "one of the means of relieving the present monetary stringency, and of a return to national prosperity". The Federation had been officially represented at the bi-metallic convention in Chicago during the summer, although there had been no previous endorsement of bi-metallism.

Immediately after the convention of 1893 affiliated unions began to give their endorsement to the political

programme. Not until comparatively late did any opposition make itself manifest. Then it took the form of a demand by such conservative leaders as Gompers, McGuire and Strasser, that plank 10, with its pledge in favour of "the collective ownership by the people of all means of production and distribution", be stricken out. Only the bakers' union seems to have rejected the programme in its entirety. The typographical union and the web-weavers' union voted to strike out plank 10. The carpenters approved plank 10, but with the amendment "as the people elect to operate". Only a partial list can be given of the unions which unconditionally endorsed the political programme. The list includes the United Mine Workers, iron and steel workers, lasters, tailors, wood workers, flint glass workers, brewery workmen, painters, furniture workers, street railway employees, waiters, shoe workers, textile workers, mule spinners, machinists, and the German-American typographical union. The cigar makers' union, by a referendum vote, approved every plank of the political programme, but the result of the vote was not given out until after the convention of the Federation. The programme was approved, also, by the state federations of labour of Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Montana. It also had the endorsement of city centrals in Baltimore, New Haven, Cleveland, Toledo, Lansing, Saginaw, Grand Rapids, and Milwaukee.

During 1894 the trade unions were active participants in politics. Of course, the Federation, pending the referendum on the programme, refrained from partisan politics and confined itself to agitation and lobbying for favoured measures. But many of these were clearly different from such strictly trade union legislative measures, as shorter hours, restricting immigration, or granting freedom from legal prosecution to trade unions. Thus in the summer the Executive Council, in co-operation with the Bi-Metallic League, issued a number of circulars on behalf of the free coinage of silver. It also lobbied actively on behalf

of the bill providing for nationalisation of the telegraph and the telephone system. On the other hand, the representatives of the Federation in the peace conference with the Knights of Labour of the summer of 1894 declined to go upon record as favouring an endorsement of the People's Party, on the ground that their instructions did not cover this point.

Locally, however, the trade unions were unequivocally in politics. A very large number of members were candidates for office. A majority of them ran upon the People's Party, or "Populist" ticket. In many localities the trade unions virtually were part of the Populist party machinery. In November, 1894, the *Federationist* give a list of more than 300 union members, candidates for some elective office. Only a half dozen of these, however, were elected.

It was mainly to these local failures that Gompers pointed in his presidential address at the convention of 1894 as an argument against the adoption of the political programme by the Federation. His attitude clearly foreshadowed the destiny of the programme at the convention. The first attack was made upon the preamble, upon the ground that the statement therein that the English trade unions had declared for independent political action was false. By a vote of 1,345 to 861 the convention struck out the preamble. The real fight, however, was over plank 10, endorsing socialism. Upon motion of the typographical union, a substitute was adopted, calling for the "abolition of the monopoly system of land holding and the substitution therefor of a title of occupancy and use only". Some of the delegates seem to have interpreted this substitute as a declaration for the single tax; but the majority of those who voted in its favour probably acted upon the principle, "anything to beat socialism".

The substitute attacking monopoly system of land holding undoubtedly served to confuse the issue, as the single tax philosophy was still popular among the workers. Many of the American unionists aspired to return to the land and, with the Irish unionists, incorporated single tax in

their middle class decalogue. The delegates of the painters, and part of the representatives of the mine workers, the iron and steel workers, the tailors, and the lasters, voted for the substitute, although their unions had endorsed the entire political programme. Upon the rejection of the preamble all but one of the cigar makers' delegates voted with the majority, explaining their vote upon the ground that their instruction covered only the "platform", but not the "preamble". In revenge, the defeated socialists combined with the supporters of McBride of the mine workers and elected him president instead of Gompers.

At the 1895 convention Gompers was re-elected and the socialists were completely routed. The wage conscious unionists were now completely in control of the A. F. of L.

The Socialist Labour Party, then the exclusive political expression of the socialists, took no part officially in these activities. The recognised party leaders and the official party press had withdrawn their support and sympathy from the Federation ever since the 1890 Detroit convention, at which it was voted that city centrals could not seat delegates from socialist branches. The leaders of the party, headed by Daniel De Leon, now one of the outstanding socialist leaders, turned their attention to winning the Knights of Labour. They apparently figured that by capturing the rapidly declining Knights they could resuscitate it into a powerful rival of the Federation. It was still a gamble, as Gompers acknowledged in his autobiography, whether the Federation was to survive as the dominant national labour federation. Most of the national unions, however, had gravitated towards the Federation and this attempt of De Leon to capture the Knights and build it up as a rival of the Federation foreshadowed his conversion to dual unionism.

The nucleus upon which De Leon relied in capturing the Knights of Labour consisted of the old radical vanguard composed principally of German, Jewish and other non-English-speaking immigrant unions. They followed him into the Knights so that he at once became a power in this

noticeably disintegrating organisation. In 1893 District Assembly No. 49, the dominating unit of the Knights in New York, came under control of the Socialist Labour Party. De Leon and several other socialists were elected as delegates to the General Assembly or national convention. There they combined with Powderly's enemies and elected J. R. Sovereign Grand Master Workman, or national head. Their compensation, as the socialists afterward claimed, was the promise to appoint a member of the Socialist Labour Party as editor of the *Journal of the Knights of Labour*. By failing to fulfill his promise Sovereign precipitated a vindictive controversy between himself and De Leon. The upshot was the refusal to seat De Leon as a delegate at the 1895 annual convention. Most of De Leon's following withdrew, and war to the hilt was declared upon the Knights of Labour.

e. Radicals Divide

Thus, by 1895, the socialists found themselves badly worsted in both national federations, and, in the opinion of many, with slight immediate prospect of regaining their old influence. These conclusive defeats precipitated a stock-taking among the radicals as to the most effective policies and tactics to pursue towards the unions. The ensuing vitriolic controversy marked the separation of the radicals into contending factions based on their disagreement over policies and tactics. (This division had been foreshadowed in the controversies between the anarchists and socialists and between the Marxians and Lassalleans in the 'seventies and early 'eighties.) Indeed so extreme did they become towards each other that their struggles often eclipsed their fight on the common enemy, the conservative unionist. In the heat of controversy each side refined its particular concepts of policies and tactics so that they became associated with fundamental principles. Thereafter the struggle was as much over principles as over policies and tactics. One group favoured boring from within; the other sponsored dual unionism. One

faction believed in opportunistic and evolutionary methods; the other was equally firm in its opinion that drastic and revolutionary procedure was the more essential. One element favoured purely economic action as a means of furthering the radical cause; the other taught that economic and political action must be correlated.

In the course of the controversy the different factions separated and founded organisations through which to propagate their cause. To the impulsive, indefatigable, domineering and vindictive De Leon, overshadowed by the defeats of the socialists in the American Federation of Labour in 1890 and 1894, and still smarting from his personal defeat in the Knights of Labour in 1895, there was one course open, namely, the founding of an organisation that would supplant both national federations. For fear of opposition within the Socialist Labour Party, the Socialist Trade and Labour Alliance was launched stealthily in 1895, ostensibly to organise the unorganised, but actually to supersede the two existing national federations. Its activities meant a revival of radical dual unionism as a substitute for the pure and simple or wage conscious unionism already entrenched in the American Federation of Labour. It worked on the principle that ideologically the unions must subscribe to socialism, and politically support the Socialist Labour Party. As soon as its true objective became evident, a powerful element among the socialists, supported by the most substantial socialist unions, vehemently denounced the Alliance. They did not object to the ideal that unions should subscribe to socialism and supplement their economic by independent political action. They reaffirmed, however, their faith in achieving this objective through boring from within. Consequently they launched a vigorous campaign against De Leon and his new dual union movement. They were aghast at his daring and roughshod methods and considered the venture as foolhardy as that of the Lassalleans, which they were endeavouring to live down. Many of them were officers and influential members of unions, and

together with leading non-union socialists they saw the adherents of their cause exercising influence in most of the important unions, even controlling some of them. Besides, the conventions of the Federation served as a medium for propagating their doctrines. Although outvoted and in instances unfairly thwarted, they nevertheless considered themselves favourably situated. They contended that the great mass of the workers, being fundamentally interested in bettering their immediate condition rather than in social theories, would remain with the conservative unions. Therefore, abandoning the unions would only leave the conservative leaders in complete control of the masses. De Leon, however, secured the endorsement of the Socialist Labour Party.⁵ Lacking substantial backing, his venture made little headway. As soon as the excitement dissipated and the Alliance settled down to the usual routine, its small membership dwindled so that it became a propaganda rather than a practical organisation of unions.

Failure of the Alliance to attract unions and members did not discourage the disciples of dual unionism. On the contrary, the idea took on a new lease of life. It even began to take root among American radical unionists. This decade (1895-1905) witnessed the spectacular outcropping of dual organisations, particularly in the Far West. Conspicuous among these was the Western Federation of Miners. Founded in 1893, it almost immediately affiliated with the American Federation of Labour. It separated from the Federation, however, in 1897, and was the effective agency in forming, in 1898, the Western Labour Union, which in 1902 changed its name to the American Labour Union. This organisation resembled the Alliance in favouring radical industrial unionism, in its opposition

⁵ N. I. Stone, *The Attitude of the Socialists Toward the Trade Unions*; Daniel De Leon and Job Harriman, *A Debate on the Tactics of the S. T. & L. A. Toward Trade Unions*; Hillquit, *op. cit.*, pp. 293-294, 301-304, 322-329; Commons and Associates, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 518-519; Brissenden, *History of the I. W. W.*, pp. 46-53.

to the American Federation of Labour and its desire to build up a revolutionary labour movement. There were other less significant radical unions of American and English-speaking workers. All of them were bitter in their opposition to the American Federation of Labour. Excepting the Western Federation of Miners, the others were, like the Alliance, "phantom organisations", or propaganda sects (Brissenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-56). These scattered units combined in 1905 to form the Industrial Workers of the World (I. W. W.)—a coalition of immigrant and American workers of radical dual union proclivities. The few substantial unions and the opportunist socialists who still thought it possible to build up a national labour federation of socialist unions that would strive as much for the immediate betterment of conditions as for the bringing about of the final overthrow of capitalism, soon had reason to regret the company they were in. Seeing the I. W. W. succumb to the control of the revolutionary radicals who stressed the need of preparing the workers for an early revolution and decried undue concern in the day-to-day problems of the workers, they withdrew. But the I. W. W. had still to undergo another schism before it launched out on its spectacular career. The revolutionary radicals were not themselves in total agreement on policies and tactics. One faction scorned political action and subscribed to anarcho-syndicalist doctrines. The other led by the indomitable De Leon and the Socialist Labour Party regarded political action as a valuable propaganda medium. Unlike the opportunist socialists, this group scoffed at the belief that political action should be directed to improving the immediate working and living conditions through legislation. These "palliatives" in their opinion only diverted the attention of the workers from the final objective—the overthrow of capitalism and the substitution therefor of the socialist commonwealth. Their disagreement with the anarcho-syndicalists resulted from the latter's disregard for political action. All these factions differed also as to the type

of state or social order that would best replace the present capitalist order.

Failing to secure endorsement of the Socialist Labour Party policies and tactics, De Leon and his followers also withdrew from the I. W. W. Believing, however, in dual unionism, they founded a rival organisation which was at first known as the Detroit I. W. W., but later assumed the name of W. I. I. U.—Workers' International Industrial Union (Brissenden, *op cit.*, chaps. i, ii, v, ix, x, and xi). Thus by 1908 radical dual unionism had fallen entirely into the hands of the revolutionary radical elements. They scoffed at the opportunist radical advocacy of peaceful and gradual penetration of the existing unions and gradual capture of the state in order to dethrone capitalism. For a brief period the I. W. W. experienced spectacular success among the unorganised and unskilled, but now functions chiefly among migratory workers. The W. I. I. U. made a valiant but unsuccessful effort to found unions. Failing in this undertaking it gradually reverted to propaganda activities. Within the past few years it has consumed its declining energies in a debate with its political handmaid, the Socialist Labour Party, as to which was the more effective propaganda organisation. Both conceded that their respective aspirations to generate mass economic and political movements have not materialised. They also agreed that it was wasteful duplication for two propaganda bodies to expound the same ideology and tactics. Neither side would at first acknowledge that the other was better adapted for the fulfillment of their function. In 1925, however, the remnants of the W. I. I. U. voted to dissolve, bequeathing the assets and membership to the Socialist Labour Party.

f. Dominance of Boring from Within

Although some of the opportunist socialists strayed from the boring from within path, the group in general held steadfastly to its course. They advocated moderate procedure on the economic and political fields so as to

advance the cause step by step rather than through sudden bursts of intensive action. Since the Socialist Labour Party was irretrievably committed to dual unionism they founded the Socialist Party in 1901. It became the political expression and rallying point for the boring from within radicals. Retaining the adherence of the substantial socialist unions it immediately superseded the Socialist Labour Party in popular support. Boring from within was supervised and generally directed by the Socialist Party and its subsidiary units. At American Federation of Labour conventions, as well as at many state federation and international union conventions, the socialist delegates would usually caucus and practically invariably act as a unit in the furtherance of the fortunes of their cause. Similarly they were active in city centrals, local unions and other minor union subdivisions. Up to the entrance of the United States into the World War the Socialist Party group was the effective opposition in the American Federation of Labour.

Just as the revolutionary radicals became the champions of dual unionism so the opportunist radicals espoused the virtues of boring from within. Each group rationalised its casual experiences into a clear-cut dogma justifying its brand of union policies and tactics. Henceforth there was little ground for co-operation or understanding among the different factions.

Unsettled conditions resulting from the World War and the Bolshevik revolution shook the radicals out of their customary procedure and thinking. The socialists modified their conception of boring from within. Those revolutionary radicals who were imbued with Communism have reversed their position and repudiated dual unionism. They are now striving to outrival the socialists in boring from within. Only the I. W. W. remnants still subscribe to dual unionism as a matter of principle. At present, therefore, the overwhelming sentiment among radicals is for boring from within.

II. SOCIALIST BORING FROM WITHIN

a. Growth of Socialist Influence

As the sole inheritors of boring from within, the opportunist socialists, with the Socialist Party as the base of operation, pursued their former aggressive policy of winning the unions for socialism. The international unions that had backed the earlier attempts at penetrating the American Federation of Labour generally continued their support. Other unions were also gradually won over either in whole or in part. The socialists made steady gains so that by the outbreak of the World War some of the largest and most influential unions supported their cause. Among these were the Brewery and Bakery Workers, Shingle Weavers, Cloth Hat and Cap Makers (this union has since changed its name to Cloth Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers' International Union), Ladies' Garment Workers, Fur Workers, Journeymen Tailors, Western Federation of Miners (name changed to Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' International Union). The socialists met with like success in other unions. Thus the 1903 convention of the International Association of Machinists "ordered submitted to the membership" the question of endorsing socialism. Simultaneously a referendum vote was taken on the advisability of "industrial extension of the jurisdiction" so as to admit semi-skilled workers into the union. Both questions were carried through the agitation of the socialists.¹ In addition the socialists were a factor in other leading unions. Even Gompers' union, the Cigar Makers, elected J. Mahlon Barnes, who for many years was national secretary of the Socialist Party, as one of its delegates to the Federation conventions. Similarly Max J. Hayes, one of the most

¹ Hewitt, "A Brief History of the International Association of Machinists", in *American Labour Year Book*, 1917-18, p. 103.

prominent socialists, was regularly chosen by the International Typographical Union as one of its representatives to Federation conventions. Over half of the delegates of the United Mine Workers consisted of prominent socialists. Besides, the socialists controlled the Illinois district, the most powerful subdivision of the coal miners' union. At A. F. of L. conventions the socialists succeeded in mustering about a third of the votes. The 1912 convention is the last at which the socialists contested the presidency and serves as a test of their strength. Max J. Hayes was selected to carry the socialist banner. Five international unions cast their entire vote for Hayes. They were the Bakery Workers, Cloth Hat and Cap Makers, Machinists, Western Federation of Miners and Shingle Weavers. Other important unions also supported the socialist candidate substantially. The entire delegation except one of the United Mine Workers, two-thirds of the Journeymen Tailors, three-fifths of the Brewery Workers, one-half of the Painters and Decorators, one-half of the Quarry Workers, cast their votes for Hayes. (The vote of each international union is equally apportioned among the delegates representing it.) One delegate each of the Cigar Makers, Ladies' Garment Workers, Granite Cutters, Steel Workers and Typographical Union also voted for the socialist candidate. The vote stood: Gompers, 11,974, and Hayes, 5,073 (*A. F. of L. Proceedings*, 1912, pp. 354-355).

Mounting socialist influence and prestige is also eloquently attested by the special effort of the Civic Federation to unite the conservative unionists with the employers, business and professional men to combat socialism. An additional tribute to their growing prestige in the labour movement was the approval given by the Catholic hierarchy to the launching of the Militia of Christ in order to array the unionists of the faith against the legions of socialism.

The socialists did not, of course, merely attempt to elect their kind to the offices of the Federation and its

affiliated unions. They naturally agitated for the endorsement and adoption of their principles. Several times they tried to secure outright endorsement of socialism by the Federation. Failing in that attempt they featured such issues as would commit the Federation and its affiliated bodies to political action and socialisation of industry. Hence, they introduced resolutions favouring government ownership, social insurance, shorter hour legislation and other labour and social reform legislation. The need for changing the union structure through industrial unionism and its significance for the organisation of the unskilled were also featured. Outside of these union reforms the socialists did not concern themselves with the internal affairs of organised labour, except to advocate defeat of the conservative leaders. The socialist leaders counselled their followers to concentrate their energies on issues that could be brought to fruition only through legislation and political action. By this procedure the socialists apparently aimed to combat the prejudice of the conservative unionists towards any form of political action. At this time the Socialist Party was the exclusive advocate of social reform, and they evidently felt that the workers and the labour movement, by realising the significance of legislation in ameliorating conditions and correcting glaring social evils, would soon come to recognise the need for independent working class political action and the ultimate abolition of the wage system. So confident were the socialists of this outcome that they were as much interested in committing the labour movement to independent political action as they were in converting it to socialism. This belief was quite in accord with their tactical conception as opportunists who relied on gradual methods for the realisation of their objective.

Another issue that loomed conspicuously in the socialist agitation was aimed at the democratisation of union government. In their struggle to permeate the unions the socialists concentrated upon the membership; so they wanted to change the governmental machinery in order to make

the unions more responsive to the rank and file. This object they proposed to accomplish through the initiative, referendum and recall. Thus the power of officials and conventions to thwart the wish of the membership, over whom the socialists were exercising greater and greater influence, would be checked. In this agitation the socialists were eminently successful, partly because their efforts were supplemented by the fact that the period was one of political reform when all liberal elements favoured the introduction of these changes. At any rate many of the unions during this time amended their constitutions by inserting provisions for direct legislation, and the socialists were the articulate force that advocated their adoption.

Just as the socialist star was ascending at an unprecedented rate in the labour firmament the World War broke out. Attacked and persecuted for their anti-war position and later torn by internal strife the socialist forces rapidly disintegrated. Their activities in the trade union movement as well as in the political arena subsided materially. In innumerable areas socialist political activity was practically completely abandoned. In the unions the socialists ceased to press for consideration of their ideas. This change in conditions marks the close of the socialist militant boring from within policy. During this period of intense aggression their appeal had been made direct to the masses over the heads of the conservative labour leaders. Their propaganda and agitation had sought not only to convert the union workers to their philosophy and programme of action. It had equally emphasised the imperative necessity of dethroning the conservative leaders because they blocked the fulfilment of the socialist ideals. Although the socialists had officially declared that the "party does not seek to dictate to organised labour in matters of internal organisation and union policy",² their militant boring from within policy had forced them to at least take an active part in union politics. It was by exercising

² Ghent (Editor), *Socialism and Organised Labour*, "Appeal Socialist Classics", No. 7, p. 30.

influence at conventions and elections that they had expected to procure endorsement and application of their principles. This procedure had presupposed campaigning for measures and policies that were in accord with socialist concepts. It had not infrequently made it necessary to urge relegation of the conservative labour leaders to private life. The opinion of the prominent leaders who understood these distinctions more precisely than their disciples and followers was expressed by Morris Hillquit in testifying before the United States Commission on Industrial Relations in 1914. In discussing the attitude of the Socialist Party towards the trade unions he stated that "the Socialist Party, or at least the majority of its members, believe that the present leadership of the American Federation of Labour is somewhat archaic, somewhat antiquated, too conservative and not efficient enough for the objects and purposes of the American Federation of Labour. That is the general socialist position."³ During periods of excitement and strife it had not always been possible to maintain the distinction between meddling in the internal affairs of the unions and attacking conservative officials. This difficulty is evident from a perusal of socialist publications of the time. The socialists were generally outspoken in criticising the activities of the leaders and their policies. Indeed such a course is unavoidable in pursuing a militant boring from within policy.

b. Disintegration of Socialist Opposition

After the World War the socialist boring from within policies and tactics were completely reversed. Both in their union and political activities they have ceased forcing their point of view. Instead they aim to sue for the confidence and good will of the entrenched labour leaders. The socialist unions were in part induced to change their attitude because of the feeling that isolation, brought on by their aggressive opposition, had placed them at a

³ *The Double Edge of Labour's Sword, Discussion and Testimony on Socialism and Trade Unionism*, by Hillquit, Gompers and Hayes, p. 46. (Pamphlet issued by the Socialist Party.)

disadvantage in furthering the interests of their individual unions. Most of them operated in miscellaneous trades that profited from the assistance of the conservative unions and of the labour movement in general. As socialist unions with a preponderance of immigrant membership they carried the odium of the Socialist Party's official opposition to the war and felt at a considerable disadvantage in their practical efforts to protect and further the immediate interests of the membership. They sought the backing of the officials of the labour movement in order to counteract this handicap as well as to obtain other practical assistance. Thus the needle trades unions felt the need of assistance from other unions in organising "out of town" garment workers. There is a tendency of manufacturers to locate in small towns outside the large manufacturing centres controlled by the unions. In such communities the other local unions and central labour bodies can render valuable aid if so inclined. A word from the higher officials generally turns the trick. Likewise a union that is not regarded as a dangerous enemy of the social order can with the aid of the official labour movement procure and maintain the good will of the public and fairer treatment in the press. These aids prove helpful in holding the police in leash during strikes and lockouts and in making judges more lenient. As a further instance, the bakers, besides desiring these favourable conditions, relied upon the entire labour movement to demand union label bread; and the brewery workers, fighting for their very existence, valued the aid of the conservative labour leaders in fighting prohibition.

Other circumstances were undoubtedly of even greater importance in influencing the change in policy of the socialist unions. The socialists lost their foothold in some of the influential unions, as the Miners. Then, too, since their noses were kept close to the grindstone of the trying daily routine required of them as union managers, their capacity and imagination were taxed. Engrossed in the daily problems of the union, they found the glamour and

idealism of socialism with its future co-operative commonwealth crowded out by the matter-of-fact duties, or stripped of their drawing power. Again, the membership was as unappreciative and critical of its socialist leadership as the workers in the conservative unions were of their leaders. Superimposed upon these irritating experiences followed the indiscriminate onslaughts of the communists directed alike at the leadership of the socialist and the conservative unions. This challenge of a common enemy seems to have provided the needed impetus for the turning of the socialist union leaders from their old course of militancy towards seeking the good will and confidence of the leaders of the other unions. The Gompers administration was only too pleased to have their support since it was hard pressed by a dissident group led by Hutcheson of the Carpenters and Lewis of the Miners, the two largest unions in the Federation. The so-called railroad unions had also formed a bloc that was chiefly anti-administration. A few of the socialist delegates sided with the new opposition, but the bulk became supporters of the Gompers administration in contests for office within the Federation. On issues of policy, however, they usually aligned themselves with the railroad group and other "progressives". Thus they voted for the Plumb Plan and its equivalent for other industries. At the same time they joined in re-electing Gompers.⁴

This new political alignment of the socialists with the administration forces marks the end of their leadership of the opposition in the labour movement. They have abandoned the rôle of initiators of new issues for the labour movement. They are no longer the centre of the aggressive opposition.

In its political activities the Socialist Party has followed a course similar to that of the socialist trade unionists. It has ceased attacking the conservative unions and labour

⁴ Saposs, "Post War A. F. of L. Politics", *American Labour Monthly*, March, 1923; "Out of the Beaten Path", *The Survey*, July 16, 1921.

leaders. Many factors have contributed to this action. In part it must have been influenced by the decision of the socialist unions, the backbone of the party, to forsake their militant policy of boring from within. Possibly of equal significance was the fact that the unpopular position of the party during the War frightened away many of its former followers. The other event which must have influenced the change in policy was the internal strife that resulted from the belief of a large part of the Socialist Party membership, particularly in the foreign language federations, that the party was not sufficiently revolutionary in expression and action. Part of this element was expelled and the remainder seceded. These various turns of fortune left the Socialist Party with an organisation and leaders, but a depleted dues-paying membership. From a yearly average of 104,822 in 1919 the membership dwindled to 11,019 in 1922.⁵ The realistic leadership must have appreciated the fact that a continuance of their original militant policy against the conservative labour leaders and unions would under these conditions be more comical than fighting windmills. Action was, therefore, taken to modify policies of aggression and political aloofness in order that the party might seek the co-operation and good will of the conservative labour leaders and unions as did the socialist unions. This strategy required a new declaration on the attitude of the party towards the trade unions, as well as a modification of the tenets which forbade it to co-operate with non-socialist labour elements in independent political action. As a first step towards renunciation of its self-imposed policy of political isolation, the Socialist Party in the 1921 convention adopted the following resolution: "That the incoming National Executive Committee be instructed to make a careful survey of all radical and labour organisations in the country, with a view of ascertaining their strength, disposition, and readiness to co-operate with

⁵ *American Labour Year Book*, 1923-24, p. 125; 1921-22, pp. 392-407.

the socialist movement upon a platform not inconsistent with that of the party, and on a plan which will preserve the integrity and autonomy of the Socialist Party; and that the National Executive Committee report its findings with recommendations to the next annual convention of the Socialist Party" (*American Labour Year Book*, 1921-22, p. 405).

The following year the constitution was amended so as to permit state organisations of the party to co-operate "with organisations of labour and working farmers within their state in independent political action, but such co-operation must in all cases be on the following conditions: (1) the term 'independent political action' shall be understood to mean the nomination and election of candidates by a party of workers, farmers and socialists organised in express opposition to the Republican and Democratic parties, and excluding participation in the primaries of such parties as well as voting for their candidates in public elections; (2) that in any form of political co-operation the independence and integrity of organisation and official political standing of the Socialist Party be fully preserved; (3) the political programmes and platforms adopted for such joint political action shall not be inconsistent with the platform and declaration of principles of the Socialist Party; (4) that all co-operation of socialist state organisations shall be subject to approval by the National Executive Committee." ⁶

c. New Militant Elements

In the meantime there had appeared on the horizon of the labour movement two new groups that had copied the aggressive policy of the socialists in appealing to the membership over the heads of the leaders. One was the communist group (now organised in the Workers' Party) which drew its following largely from former Socialist Party members. The other was the Farmer-Labour Party,

⁶ *American Labour Year Book*, 1923-24, p. 131. For a statement of the original policy see *American Labour Year Book*, 1919-20, pp. 404-405.

led by ex-socialists and sympathisers. Both these elements made overtures to the Socialist Party for co-operation. The reasons given in rejecting these proffers of co-operation clearly indicate the change in the socialist policy of boring from within. In its answer to the Workers' Party the convention declared unanimously that "if the communists had urged organisations of the working class to form a united front at the end of the World War, 'regardless of political differences', as the Workers' Party now urges, this front would have been established five years ago. Instead of this policy, the Communist International pursued a deliberate policy of division. It ordered splits in every country. It sowed hatreds and dissensions among the working class. It destroyed all possibility of solidarity of the workers in each nation. It brought civil war into the organisations of the workers" (*American Labour Year Book*, 1923-24, p. 130). Of course, the socialists were smarting, as their reply indicates from the "disruptionist" attacks of the communists throughout the world, which attack had in this country been particularly effective in reducing the Socialist Party to a skeleton.

The answer to the invitation of the Farmer-Labour Party was more friendly but equally firm. It definitely voiced the opinion of the Socialist Party as to the importance of winning the confidence and support of the union leaders instead of antagonising them. The reply read: "The Socialist Party fully agrees with the Farmer-Labour Party as to the desirability of uniting the workers on the political field. The only question is how soon and by what means this end can best be attained.

"A necessary condition to the establishment of a really powerful political party of the working class is the active support of at least a majority of the great trade unions. Unless there is assurance that this support is now obtainable, any attempt at this time to effect the proposed 'unity' of the political forces of the entire working class would result in disappointment" (*Ibid.*, p. 132).

At the same convention, in 1923, the Socialist Party revamped its declaration on its attitude towards the unions so that its profession of friendship and desire for their good will would be unmistakable. It announced that it is the "duty of the Socialist Party, its press, and its auxiliary institutions to give whole-hearted support to the labour organisations in all their struggles for higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions. It is neither the right nor the interest of the Socialist Party to attempt to dictate to the unions concerning their internal affairs nor to interfere in the jurisdictional and other disputes which sometimes unfortunately divide the labour movement. . . . *The Socialist Party specifically points out the error into which sincere, but too impatient socialists or persons reputed to be socialists, have sometimes fallen, of seeking to capture the unions, or to force their own ideas upon them by schismatic organisation within their ranks and by factional attacks upon their leaders*" (*Ibid.*, p. 132. Author's italics). Here was a clear-cut statement setting forth indirectly the difference between the policies and tactics of the Socialist Party and of the Farmer-Labour Party and Workers' Party. This action was undoubtedly designed to enable the Socialist Party to become an influential factor in the Conference for Progressive Political Action, an organisation launched in February, 1922. This organisation was largely an outgrowth of the political and legislative activities and needs of the railroad unions. Backed by substantial Federation and independent unions, particularly the railroad brotherhoods, it seemed to be heading towards some form of independent political action. It differed from the American Federation of Labour in that it was not inexorably committed to non-partisan political action and the refusal to co-operate with independent unions as well as labour and farmer political organisations. Because it manifested this liberal attitude all the labour groups disappointed in the traditional Federation non-partisan political policy gravitated towards the Conference for Progressive Po-

litical Action. Farmer groups and free-lance liberals were also invited to participate. The Socialist Party and the Farmer-Labour Party were also admitted, but the Workers' Party was denied admittance to the conference (*Ibid.*, pp. 147-153). Hence, while the Socialist Party was aloof towards elements that were antagonising labour leaders and existing unions it readily took advantage of the opportunity to work with the leaders of the large unions in the Conference for Progressive Political Action. When the Conference for Progressive Political Action endorsed the LaFollette-Wheeler Progressive presidential ticket the Socialist Party followed and with the others welcomed the endorsement of the American Federation of Labour (*Ibid.*, 1925, pp. 132-140).

Just as the socialists had anticipated, their rôle was most significant in this political venture. Numerically they were not the dominant group but at understanding the art of conducting political campaigns and comprehending the intricate issues, they excelled. They possessed the political machinery and experienced leaders. They were better informed on the broader social issues and knew how to place them effectively before the masses. They were also conversant with the strategy and tactics of conducting a nation-wide political campaign. The other groups found it necessary to rely upon their organisation during the campaign. At the conferences the socialists held the centre of the stage, much to the dismay of the labour leaders and others.

d. Resumption of Non-Partisan Political Action

Following the last presidential campaign the powerful unions that backed the LaFollette-Wheeler Progressive ticket as well as the American Federation of Labour have gradually reaffirmed their faith in non-partisan political action. On the other hand the original advocates of independent political action who were part of the Conference for Progressive Political Action still believe in its efficacy. They are divided, however, over methods of procedure and principles of organisation. The liberals

would found a people's party, whereas the socialists are partial towards a "class" party on the lines of the British Labour Party. Hence these various elements that joined in fostering the LaFollette-Wheeler Progressive ticket have gone their respective ways.⁷

Significant from the point of view of socialist boring from within tactics is the fact that the reciprocal feeling of good will between the socialists and the trade union leaders did not suffer materially during this liquidation of united independent political action. The news story in *The New Leader*, February 28, 1925, reporting this conference contains the following optimistic account: "Seldom has a body of men of such divergent opinions conducted a discussion with such good feeling as the debate on the question of a labour party. It is necessary to emphasise this as American labour conventions have often been the scene of discussions that have degenerated into abuse and the exchange of personalities." Consequently the socialists feel that by retaining this confidence and friendship of the labour leaders they will be able to pursue without opposition their propaganda and ultimately convert the labour movement to their point of view. This faith is clearly intimated in the following excerpt from an editorial in the same issue of *The New Leader*: "We won the respect and confidence of those with whom we disagreed. We parted as friends. We have also won the respect of many thousands of the members of the unions who appreciate our stand for principle. This respect will eventually mature as converts and devoted workers for the one party of labour in the United States." Nor have the socialists or trade unionists expressed hostility towards each other since the parting of the political ways. Indeed the friendliness and good will that existed during their political co-operation is still manifest and all concerned are anxious to perpetuate this feeling.

⁷ *The New Leader* (N. Y. Socialist Weekly), "Importance of the Chicago Conference", January 17, 1925; the sessions at which the separation occurred are reported in *The New Leader* for February 28, 1925.

Significant of the new attitude of the Socialist Party towards the conservative unions and the labour leaders are the sentiments expressed in an article by one of its outstanding leaders, James Oneal, editor of *The New Leader*, and one who stands high in the councils of the party. The article is portentously entitled "Healing the Labour-Socialist Wound", and appeared in *The Evening Sun*, Baltimore, July 17, 1925. The following excerpts are indicative of the new trend in socialist trade union policy: "Students of the American Federation of Labour have observed some tendencies since the ascension of William Green to the presidency of the organisation which mark the first change of importance in many years. The change is more symptomatic than avowed, yet it is apparently a new approach toward a policy of tolerance that might well become significant in the next few years. Mr. Green came to the headship of the American Federation of Labour a conservative of the school of Mr. Gompers, but without the bitter memories growing out of a misunderstanding with socialists many years ago. Mr. Gompers appeared to nurse these early quarrels and showed no inclination to forget them. He had a certain justification in the knowledge that time had proved (and many socialists later admitted) that he was right in the original controversy. But in nursing these quarrels Mr. Gompers often gave the impression that he was more anti-socialist than he was pro-union. Not that he lacked in loyalty to trade unionism. No man was more loyal, but his writings and public utterances were so often directed against socialism that this activity appeared to be a personal obsession. The result was that scarcely an issue of *The American Federationist* appeared that did not contain some critical and even bitter reference to the socialists in one form or another. . . . Under the direction of William Green this policy has been abandoned. The approach to a new attitude, however, does not mean a change of policy in relation to the I. W. W. and the communists. . . . Nor does the broader attitude necessarily imply a more

sympathetic attitude toward the organisation of a labour party, although this is likely to come in time. It does mean that men can urge the organisation of a labour party without being subjected to bitter criticism or having their motives questioned as they have in the past. The change in this matter is one of attitude and approach, not of policy. With the passing of Gompers there are many who hoped that the old antagonism, having its origin in a past issue now forgotten, would give way to a tolerance at least as generous as that displayed by Mr. Gompers himself some thirty years ago. Present tendencies of the American Federation of Labour indicate that this hope may be fully justified in the coming years."

Hence while the socialists are reorganising their party and independently resuming their activities they are not reviving the old aggressive boring from within policy. Notwithstanding the fact that the unions have repudiated independent political action it would seem that they propose to pursue both on the economic and political fields the practise of not fighting or antagonising the conservative labour leaders. If they take issue with them it will be merely in the nature of analysis and perhaps gentle chiding rather than rebuke or scathing criticism. While they propose to continue their propaganda among the organised workers, it will evidently not be tinged with attacks upon the leaders. The union members will apparently be urged to prod on their leaders to support the socialist position, particularly on independent political action, but the old urgings that the leaders are antiquated and should be deposed will probably be suppressed. By this procedure they hope to convert the masses and at least hold the confidence of the leaders. Some of the leaders have already intimated that they have no desire to obstruct those who differed with them. The future tactic will then be to maintain the good will and mutual esteem established between the socialists and the labour leaders by carrying on non-aggressive boring from within propaganda among the masses.

III. COMMUNIST BORING FROM WITHIN

THE manner in which revolutionary radicals were converted to boring from within and the way in which their aggressive tactics have resulted in their isolation by the labour movement, present a direct contrast to the experience of the opportunist radicals within recent years. Even while the revolutionary radicals were experiencing unprecedented success, a small group already felt misgivings as to dual unionism. Their outstanding representative was William Z. Foster. While knocking about Europe in 1911 he had become impressed with the syndicalists' successful application of boring from within. He had come to the same conclusion as to the defects of dual unionism that the opportunist socialists did when they disagreed with De Leon over the subject. He saw that by withdrawal from the existing unions the militant or revolutionary radicals became isolated and, moreover, left the conservatives in uncontested control of the mass of organised workers. He also observed that the masses could not be dislodged from the unions that were ministering to their daily needs even though the task was being done inefficiently. He returned a confirmed borer from within. He took the first opportunity to put the issue before the most successful dual union, the I. W. W., as candidate for the editorship of its official organ. The decision was a decisive reaffirmation of dual unionism. Foster and his followers were not, however, discouraged. In 1913, largely through Foster's efforts, Tom Mann was routed through the country. He too counselled abandonment of dual unionism and concentration on boring from within. His unequivocal parting shot in the form of an article in *The International Socialist Review*—then definitely I. W. W. in sympathy—calling upon the revolutionary radicals to take up boring from within focussed attention

on this issue (see Brissenden, *op. cit.* pp. 299-305). It gave the Foster group courage and stirred to greater activity their International Educational League of North America founded in 1911.¹

But the avalanche of unorganised strikes led by the I. W. W. swept away Foster's feeble attempts to divert the revolutionary radicals to boring from within. With the waning of the I. W. W. prestige, however, he again in 1916 set his ideas in motion by organising the International Trade Union Educational League. The league had barely gotten under way when it occurred to him that the war prosperity precluded successful agitation. Conditions seemed to him to present an exceptional opportunity for demonstrating the possibility of effective organisation work among the unorganised. As delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labour from one of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen locals he set about launching organising work in the trustified portions of industry.² His activities and accomplishments are common knowledge. Notwithstanding these achievements the I. W. W. and free-lance revolutionary radicals scoffed at and ridiculed his endeavours. Some went so far as to accuse him of having sold out to the officialdom because he abstained from propagating revolutionary doctrines and even conveyed the impression of having forsaken them. Following the steel strike Foster again undertook to rally the revolutionary radicals to the boring from within banner. For this purpose he organised in 1921 the Trade Union Educational League. While the revolutionary radicals were especially catered to in order to induce them to withdraw their allegiance to dual unionism, the league sought support from all radicals and progressives. The objective was to unify all non-conformist elements in the labour

¹ Levine, "Development of Syndicalism in the U. S." *Political Science Quarterly*, 1913.

² Saposs, "What Lies Back of Foster", *The Nation*, January 17, 1923; "How the Steel Workers Were Organised", *The Survey*, November 8, 1919; Foster, *The Great Steel Strike*, chap. xiv; see also Wm. Z. Foster in *American Labour Who's Who*.

movement in order to reform it from the inside. The salient issue was amalgamation or structural changes in unionism in accordance with industrial development. Amalgamation was the slogan, and it was discussed pro and con by the trade unionists.

a. Trade Union Isolation

Although the response from opportunist radicals and progressives who were practising boring from within was large, the League was slow in taking on momentum. The revolutionary radical rank and file and their lesser leaders were still either sceptical or avowedly hostile, and the I. W. W. was derisive, suspecting Foster of duplicity as a tool of the conservative American Federation of Labour leaders. Of course, there was the usual jealousy among the other leaders who were being eclipsed by this upstart. In the meantime the communist movement had declared for boring from within. This decision had an electrifying effect upon the revolutionary radicals, most of whom had now begun to regard communism as the avenue for emancipation of the working class. Foster undoubtedly appreciated the significance of this new and favourable development. As a former I. W. W. and revolutionary radical at heart, he was always keen to divert his kind to boring from within. From the syndicalists he had learned that the "militant minority" makes the inert mass move. To win the militants to his programme became his sole ambition. They were the élite without whom boring from within could not consummate its united front. The opportunist radicals and progressives required no converting on this point. It must have occurred to Foster that affiliation with the international communist movement would turn the trick. Here at one stroke would be corralled the thousands of defectionists from the socialist and I. W. W. ranks. Consequently he declared in 1922 for affiliation with the international communist movement. This step meant the linking of the trade union activities of the League with the political movement of the communists.

Thus to the programme of amalgamation was added the demand that unions declare for affiliation with the red international and for independent political action. In so far as Foster's objective of winning the revolutionary radicals was concerned this was a master stroke. It brought virtually all of them, with the exception of the remnants of the I. W. W., the Socialist Labour Party, and a small cult known as the Proletarian Party, into the fold of the League.³ Boring from within ceased being a pet hobby of a small group of outstanding individuals and the exclusive expression of the opportunist radicals. It now became also the watchword of the mass of revolutionary radicals. With the loss in membership and change in tactics of the socialists, the communists became, by 1922, the aggressive left wing opposition within the unions.

But this strategic move also had its boomerang. Communism had become anathema in the labour movement. The opportunist radicals chafed under its onslaughts and it was hardly to be expected that they would support an organisation endorsing principles diametrically opposed to their sacred beliefs. The progressives, who believe merely in liberalising the labour movement, were not frightened by the espousal of unorthodox dogmas, but felt it inexpedient to remain attached to a movement that the American Federation of Labour and the American public in general regarded as its bitterest and most diabolical foe. Gradually, and practically imperceptibly, the opportunist radicals and the progressives discontinued their interest in the Trade Union Educational League. This withdrawal began what might be termed the period of peaceful isolation of the communists by the free-lance opportunist radicals and progressives. The forced isolation which the socialist and conservative labour leaders imposed was of a later date. Forced isolation and expulsion of the communists cannot be understood without a knowledge of the early tactics and accomplishments of the League, and of the

³ *American Labour Year Book*, 1923-24, pp. 170-171, for a brief description of the Proletarian Party.

consequent events that culminated in the forced isolation of the revolutionary radicals. From its inception, the League made surprising headway in securing endorsements of amalgamation; for at first its opponents could not publicly identify it with bolshevism. It had launched its propaganda at a most propitious time. The socialists were still handicapped by the anti-war and pro-German stigma, so that progressives and radicals of all shades were glad to support a new organisation free from popular opprobrium. Moreover, the downward turn of the business cycle with its unemployment that led to the undermining of war standards precipitated general discontent and unrest. The disillusionment following the war added fuel to this blaze. It was the typical condition in which the workers seek relief in panaceas and damn the status quo. Besides, the labour leaders felt absolutely secure and were scornful of any opposition. They secured most favourable conditions for the workers during the war. They had the confidence of the government. What was there to fear? Hence when the amalgamation wave swept the movement it caught them wholly unprepared. Not having thought out their strategy, they either feebly opposed the new trend or indifferently permitted it to be agitated. During this phase amalgamation was endorsed at the national conventions of some of the most powerful unions. Many state federations and innumerable city central and local unions also took favourable action. Endorsing the amalgamation programme of the Trade Union Educational League became a regular debauch. The League began to acquire prestige and a substantial following. It issued a monthly organ, *The Labour Herald* (later merged with *The Liberator* and *Soviet Russia Pictorial* into *The Workers' Monthly*), and it organised national amalgamation committees in order to foster the programme in the important industries. Each of these committees still publishes a paper. Some of their local units issue small sheets.

At first the labour officials merely ignored the resolu-

tions and other declarations. But as the communists and their sympathisers became more assertive, the conservative and opportunist socialist leaders girded their belts for a fight. At the outset they fought further endorsements of amalgamation and other "communist" policies.⁴

As the revolutionary radicals, however, began to concentrate on wresting control of the union machinery by taking active part in elections, the constituted labour leaders adopted more drastic measures. In the miners' union the revolutionary radicals sided with Alexander Howat, who defied the international officials as to how the Kansas Industrial Court law should be fought.⁵ In other unions they either ran their own candidates or supported the anti-administration slate. In some unions they succeeded in electing their followers to minor official positions. More vehement attacks were also being directed upon the labour leaders. The following quotations are typical: "In the absence of a leadership capable of grasping the grave dangers that confront the labour movement, it is up to the rank and file to take the reins in its own hands."—and: "Such men are a positive menace to the labour movement! It is a social crime to keep them in the leadership of a young and vigorous movement that requires the utmost of activity and forward vision. The labour movement must have young men, men who live in the present and know how to grapple with its perplexing problems, while keeping a steady eye on the future, the goal, without which any handling of the labour problem leads to chaos and confusion."⁶

To these attacks and opposition in election contests the officials of a number of the unions retaliated by expelling members of the Trade Union Educational League and of

⁴ *American Federationist*, May, 1922; Browder, "The League Under Fire," *The Labour Herald*, June, 1922.

⁵ Dorsey, "How the 'Machine' Beat Howat", *The Labour Herald*, April, 1922; see also editorial on Machinists' election, p. 27.

⁶ Fox, "Labour and the Law", *The Labour Herald*, November, 1922, p. 15; see also "Reactionary Leadership Must Go", *The Labour Herald*, January, 1923, and Foster, "The Bankruptcy of the Labour Movement."

the Workers' Party. Ironically enough the grounds for expulsion were that the League is a dual union, and that communism is hostile to unionism. The charge that the insurgents are disruptionists is often added.

Checkmated in this effective manner the Trade Union Educational League and the communists doubled their efforts. Propaganda was vigorously supplemented by contests for union control. Communist participation in elections became more assiduous and attacks upon the union "officialdom" more vitriolic. In summing up communist activities and experiences in the Fall of 1924, as indicating the transition from purely propaganda activities to a fighting rôle, Foster concludes as follows:

"Now it [the Trade Union Educational League] is confronted with another task, which inevitably grows out of its success with the first. This is the problem of registering the will of the aroused rank and file. The bureaucrats are not only hopelessly unprogressive themselves, but they set up the most desperate opposition to all progressive movements emanating from the rank and file. To break this resistance of the bureaucrats, and thus open the way to real life and development in the unions, is the new task of the communist left wing. The fate of the labour movement depends upon its accomplishment. . . . In no country is this opposition more bitter and ruthless than in the United States. The American trade union bureaucracy, which is stupid and venal beyond compare, sticks at absolutely nothing in order to block the left wing. Unhesitatingly and recklessly it completely abolishes democratic procedure in the unions, and even smashes these organisations, in order to prevent their falling into control of the left wing. . . .

"Although the trade union bureaucrats have always been tyrannical and undemocratic towards their opposition, still they did make some show of giving such opposition its rights under the union laws—at least until the left wing began to organize and function. So far as the lefts are concerned, they are considered practically as outlaws, with no union rights whatever. In union elections, for example, they can play no effective part. In many unions, such as the Fur Workers', Ladies' Garment Workers', Miners' and others, they are ruthlessly denied the right even to place candidates in nomination. And if, in other unions, they are allowed election candidates, these are shamelessly cheated in the voting."

Then he expounds the future programme:

"The next task of the Trade Union Educational League is to crack the hard shell of official opposition against the progressive movements now surging amongst the rank and file. The usurping bureaucrats must not be allowed to get away with the present outrageous flouting of the workers' interests. The League must bring direct pressure to bear against them and, wherever possible, drive them from office, or, where this is not achieved, teach them obedience to the will of the progressive membership.

"The League must give organised expression to the revolutionary will of the membership. It must put into actual effect the demands of the rank and file. The era of passing resolutions, to have them thrown into the waste basket by sneering and stupid officials, is past; the era for action is at hand.⁷

The objective thus gradually and by force of circumstances shifted from penetration through propaganda to a struggle for outright control of the union machinery. The conflict came to the point where neither side would give quarter to the other. Expulsions are still practised and the communists are fighting back. The struggle is tensest in the needle trades unions, the stronghold of opportunist radicalism. The thick of battle centres in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' and Furriers' unions, but the others have not escaped. The United Mine Workers' Union, the Carpenters', Machinists' and other unions have also resorted to expulsions.⁸

Naturally the rank and file are not being expelled. It is mainly those who have been active in the communist ranks or have aligned themselves with them. That is, the leaders are singled out for expulsion, particularly those who have succeeded in becoming elected to official positions, whether paid or not is immaterial. Occasionally a "militant" not holding office has been expelled. When, at its Portland 1923 convention, the American Federation of

⁷ Foster, "The Next Task of the Left Wing", *The Labour Herald*, September, 1924; "Resolution on the Liquidation of Loreism", *The Daily Worker*, July 28, 1925; "Loreism and Manœuvres", *The Daily Worker*, August 10, 1925.

⁸ *Labour Organisation in Canada*, 14th Annual Report of the Department of Labour, 1924, pp. 154-156.

Labour, by a vote of 27,837 to 108, expelled Wm. F. Dunne, one of the foremost communists, the labour movement officially approved expulsion of communists. The executive officers of the Federation have also ordered many central labour bodies to purge themselves of communist delegates. Notable among these are Minneapolis, Seattle and Detroit. Local unions directly under Federation control have been required to follow a similar course.

Two distinguishing characteristics are revealed in connection with these expulsions. Never before in the history of the labour movement has there been such a wholesale expulsion of members. From the very inception of the movement unions have expelled members whether for infraction of ordinary rules or because of ideologic and tactical differences. Theoretically unions are open to workers of differing ideologies, but at critical periods this tolerance has been circumscribed. Ostensibly the expulsion may be on other grounds, but the underlying motive is difference over ideologic and tactical matters.

In the 'eighties and 'nineties when the struggle between the socialists and conservative unionists was acute, expulsions were not uncommon. Likewise the Knights of Labour expelled anarchists and socialists. They also expelled cigar makers who refused to surrender their membership in the International Cigar Makers' Union, affiliated with the A. F. of L., and with whom their cigar makers' assemblies were at war. Within recent years some of the Federation unions expelled socialists who advocated drastic changes in policies and tactics as well as an ideology not relevant to the dominant group's conception of unionism. At no time, however, did expulsions on ideologic and tactical grounds or for being aligned with an excommunicated minority group, become a practically universal policy of the labour movement. We are today witnessing a desperate struggle for control and domination where the usual rules of the game are discarded and war measures are invoked.⁹

The following excerpt from a statement by Morris

Sigman, President of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, is illustrative:

"Whatever our union undertakes to do or is engaged in doing in order to improve the working conditions of our industry, these enemies of ours attack, ridicule and deride, urging the workers to disobey the constitution of the union and to violate its laws. . . . In our trade, seasonal in nature, and always beset with many complicated industrial problems, there always has been, and always will be, a dissatisfied element of workers. . . . It is this element that furnishes the vanguard of the malcontents, who become easily incited against the union and its officers and active workers by the organised machinery of the Communist Party in this country and the Communist International—organisations which have only one purpose: to capture the existing trade unions, and make them the pliant tools of the dictatorship of the secret communist central committee, or to destroy them entirely if they cannot be captured" ("The Communist Plague in Our Unions", *Justice*, July 3, 1925).

So effective and widespread has the union ban against communists become that they have been forced, in the main, to operate underground.

Another significant characteristic of the present bitter internal conflict is that it is tensest in the old radical unions, or in those unions where the radicals have been a powerful force. Thus the socialist needle trade unions are rent in twain in the struggle for domination and control between the left and right wing radicals. Likewise the United Mine Workers, in which socialist influence was always widespread, with some of its ablest leaders socialists and in certain areas the membership overwhelmingly socialist, is in the front of the expulsion movement. The Carpenters' Union, which has always had a strong socialist membership, is also ardently expulsionist. Likewise those city labour councils where expulsions are in vogue have been under radical influence or domination. Minneapolis has been a strong socialist centre for years. And the

⁹ "Unseating of Wm. F. Dunne", *Proceedings American Federation of Labour*, 1923, pp. 256-259; Mittelman, "Basis of A. F. of L. Opposition to Amalgamation and Politics at Portland", *Journal of Political Economy*, February, 1924.

rebellious and anti-officialdom Seattle, with its unauthorised general strike, is still fresh in the memory of contemporary readers of the press.

It is not surprising that the strength of the communists should centre in unions and communities with a radical tradition. Disillusionment and discontent hardly make the masses more conservative, especially that element which seeks escape from the evils of the present system and has been educated to expect at least militant expression if not action. In a period of depression they will hitch their wagon to the star that soars highest and lights their imagination most. If living in drudgery and monotony, as well as in poverty and want, is unavoidable for the present, they are bound to seek the greatest emotional compensation in ideologies and programmes of action. This the communists have offered and those who have been cradled in radicalism are bound to respond readily.

b. Political Isolation

With the struggle raging between the communists and the other elements in the unions it was inevitable that it should also emerge on the labour political field. The manoeuvres here resulted in a more complete communist isolation than in the unions. This outcome was natural, since on the political field the communists had to maintain their ideologic identity in order to further their propaganda, whereas it was not always necessary for them to stand out so distinctly in their trade union activities.

The Socialist Party seems to have anticipated the situation by beginning to purge itself of revolutionary radicals before communism was an articulate and virile movement. In 1913 Haywood was recalled from the National Executive Committee of the party for advocating sabotage (Brissenden, *op. cit.*, p. 282). Soon thereafter the Finnish Federation withdrew from the party; and during 1919 and the following two years most of the foreign language federations either withdrew or were expelled (*American Labour Year Book*, 1919-20, pp. 405-408; 1921-22,

pp. 404, 406). The issue in this controversy centred around tactics and procedure. The bone of contention was whether emphasis should be placed on the opportunist policy of "immediate demands", or on the revolutionary policy of massing the workers for the ultimate overthrow of the capitalist system. It was the contention of those who withdrew or were expelled from the Socialist Party that it had "outlived its usefulness and was to be ranked among the parties which had betrayed the best aspirations of the working class. The failure or inability of national and local administrative bodies or elected officials to immediately carry out the wishes of this militant portion of the party, led to the denunciation . . . of the party. . . ." Instead, this group clamoured for a party that would champion "revolutionary socialism" (*Ibid.*, 1919-20, p. 406). Hence by the time communism became an organised force, those who were destined to become its disciples had either been expelled or had voluntarily withdrawn from the Socialist Party.

Isolation of the communists on the political field took on the form of refusal on the part of the other labour political groups to hold intercourse with them. Declining to associate with communists took the place of expulsions by the unions. To their overtures for co-operation, the socialists, as has been indicated, replied in the negative on the ground that they did not consider the communists sincere in their proffers of collaboration. They suspected the latter of aiming to dominate and control. As the Socialist Party owed its heaviest loss in membership to the communist onslaughts and was the chief target of communist attack on the political field, even the communists could hardly have been surprised at the rejection of their offer of co-operation. It was a case of the lion proposing united front to the lamb. Another labour political group with which the communists sought affiliation was the Conference for Progressive Political Action. The socialists having reversed their policy of boring from within for domination through control, for the procedure of peaceful

penetration or boring from within chiefly for the propagation of ideas, were invited to participate.¹⁰ The communists, on the other hand, were not welcomed when they applied. Influential in the councils of the Conference for Progressive Political Action were the leaders of some of the unions that were experiencing difficulties with the communists. By this time also anti-communist sentiment had become quite prevalent in the labour movement. Under the circumstances there were few that supported their application for admittance. Hence all communists were excluded from these gatherings by the 1922 session (*American Labour Year Book*, 1923-24, p. 151).

Failing to gain admittance to the Conference for Progressive Political Action and scorned by the Socialist Party, the communists had no alternative but to hammer away from without by encouraging a separate political movement that would not discriminate against them. This was a case where the communists were forced into dual political action because they were denied admittance to what they were willing to recognise as the bona-fide agency blazing the way for a change in the established political policy of the labour movement.

In their efforts for an independent Labour Party they were joined by the Farmer-Labour Party. Although it differed from the communists ideologically it had much in common with them tactically. Moreover, they were already bosom allies. The Farmer-Labour Party championed the communist application for admittance to the Conference for Progressive Political Action. It likewise supported the industrial programme of the Trade Union Educational League. Amalgamation received its first endorsement by the Chicago Federation of Labour, the mainspring of the Farmer-Labour Party. The meetings of the Chicago Federation of Labour served as the forum where the issues featured by the Trade Union Educational

¹⁰ Even Gompers recognised this change in tactics when he supported Meyer London, the socialist Congressional candidate in one of the New York districts.

League were expounded and received baptism. Then the faithful throughout the country sought similar rites for them at other union meetings and gatherings. Besides, these two groups had much in common tactically in attempting to get the labour movement to accept independent political action. Both were impatient at the delay in casting non-partisan political action overboard. In this respect the Farmer-Labour Party was as much the aggressor as the communists in criticising and taking the union officials to task for their halting attitude. Towards the Conference for Progressive Political Action it manifested a similarly critical attitude. Indeed, the composition of the Farmer-Labour Party virtually made this procedure inevitable. Just as the communists were the left wing of the class conscious workers, so the Farmer-Labour Party was its counterpart among the wage conscious workers. Its wage consciousness was not evidenced merely by its recognition that the workers and farmers were an exploited and permanent social class. It was also attested by its action in uncompromisingly opposing the formation of a liberal party, persistence in which course in 1920 made LaFollette decline to be the presidential candidate of the Farmer-Labour Party. Its chief support came from two sources. The socialists and free-lance liberals who despaired of interesting the American workers in an abstract ideology that smacked of foreign lineage saw in the Farmer-Labour Party an agency for weaning away the workers from the two old parties and at the same time developing among them a social consciousness. The predominant feeling of the leaders was that the party must not be hampered by a radical label or supposedly foreign connections. Its most substantial constituency consisted of local and other subsidiary units, as well as central labour bodies and state federations. Some of the more radical farmer groups also threw in their lot. In short, the dissident non-class conscious elements in the labour and farmer movements formed the backbone of the Farmer-Labour Party. Their objective was to bring about

independent political action as soon as possible. Therefore, as the militant expression of the wage conscious workers and radical farmer groups the Farmer-Labour Party was also fighting the dominant leadership. Its impatience with the delay of the Conference for Progressive Political Action in embarking upon independent political action led it to withdraw its membership in the spring of 1922 (*American Labour Year Book*, 1923-24, p. 147). Since this was the session at which the communists were denied affiliation, the class conscious and wage conscious left wing groups found themselves similarly circumstanced. They immediately formed an alliance against the political and economic leaders of the workers.

These two left wing groups now jointly undertook the task of securing immediate labour independent political action by appealing over the heads of the leaders to the rank and file. The initiative for calling a conference of all labour and farmer groups interested in the immediate inauguration of a labour party was taken by the Farmer-Labour Party. The gathering was held in July, 1923. As was to be expected, the international union officials and the Socialist Party either ignored the call or declined the invitation since the communists were asked to participate. It now devolved upon these two left wing groups to go through with the plan. The conference consisted of representatives of local and other of the lesser union units and the more radical farmer organisations. It was very largely a rank and file gathering. The majority of the delegates yearned for immediate action and would brook no delay. And they favoured radical and defiant action towards the leaders. It seems that the leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party, most of whom held responsible union positions, and who wanted a labour party without a radical label, realised that this conference was inevitably tending towards uncompromising defiance of the labour leaders and communist domination. The latter outcome particularly was committing the conference to a position which they were not ready to endorse. On the other hand

the communists evidently anticipated such a turn of affairs and seemed to have come prepared for it. Consequently when the Farmer-Labour group hesitated and tried to check the conference they came to the front and took control. The Farmer-Labour Party withdrew from the gathering and the remaining elements founded the Federated Farmer-Labour Party under communist domination (*Ibid.*, pp. 157-158).

This episode brought on the complete political isolation of the communists and the later disintegration of the Farmer-Labour Party. The former refused, however, publicly to acknowledge their isolation, and the Federated Farmer-Labour Party called a conference in the summer of 1924 to which non-communists were invited. It was controlled by the communists, although the Presidential ticket was filled with non-communists. As the later "Party Discussions" indicate, the communists realised that this was merely a gesture ("Party Discussion" section in *The Daily Worker* during the late Winter and Spring of 1925).

"After the endorsement of LaFollette by the Conference for Progressive Political Action . . . a majority of the National Executive Committee of the Farmer-Labour Party withdrew the . . ." non-communist Presidential slate "and pledged support to the Workers' Party. A statement signed by . . . five of the seven members of the committee, gave as the reasons for their decision that the . . ." Conference for Progressive Political Action had "decided against a farmer-labour party" and had "betrayed the farmer-labour masses into the hands of merchants, manufacturers, bankers, and rich farmers, and thus destroyed the only chance for a united front campaign" (*American Labour Year Book*, 1925, pp. 145-148).

The Workers' Party now nominated its own presidential ticket and carried on a separate campaign for the propagation of communism (*Ibid.*, 1925, pp. 155-156).

c. Present Communist Program

As sponsors of a social revolutionary movement, the communists naturally have a very comprehensive pro-

gramme touching upon all vital international and national problems. Mention can here be made only of the more important issues dealing with the broader social aspects, as well as the immediate and specific internal trade union policies and tactics. In their discussion of international affairs commercial and diplomatic recognition of Soviet Russia and unequivocal opposition to imperialism are featured. Likewise world trade union unity is emphasised. By the latter demand is meant the admission of communist unions to the International Federation of Trade Unions. This organisation is popularly known as the Amsterdam International, with which the dominant labour movements of the important industrial countries (except the United States and the Soviet Union) are affiliated. Simultaneously the communists strive to induce the individual unions and the labour movement of this country to join the Red International of Labour Unions. As the communist trade union international this body is a rival of the International Federation of Trade Unions, but, on the principle of boring from within, it encourages its affiliated units to seek admittance to the latter.

As a basis for the broader national demands the communists seek to commit the labour movement to the revolutionary aims of communism in order to secure the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a worker's republic. In accordance with this objective a labour party and nationalisation of basic industries is advocated. Likewise alliance with radical farmer groups, particularly on the political field, is demanded.

The larger part of the communist programme naturally concerns itself with the internal union problems and policies. In the relations of the unions with employers and the government "class struggle" tactics are counselled as against "class collaboration" tactics. Thus union management co-operation in production as exemplified in the so-called B. & O. plan is roundly condemned. Similarly, acceptance of government intervention as conciliator or mediator in industrial disputes, as endorsed by the railroad

unions, is severely attacked. In line with this attitude of uncompromising militancy the communists advise the workers to resist all wage reductions and attempts at lengthening hours of labour.

In order that organised labour may more successfully wage the class struggle, structural union changes are demanded. Hence, amalgamation is featured in the form of departmentalised industrial unions. In addition fighting alliances between closely interdependent industrial unions is considered imperative. These understandings are proposed in order to assure united action and support when a single industrial union finds itself checkmated by the stubborn resistance of the employers. Another remedy for strengthening the labour movement proposed by the communists is organising the unorganised, particularly in the so-called trustified industries.

Fundamentally the foregoing issues and demands are linked with an attack upon the present union leadership. The "officialdom" is accused of either betraying or not efficiently serving the interests of the membership. An extensive line of procedure is recommended for replacing the present leaders. Democratising the unions, particularly insistence upon direct election of all union officials, including paid organisers, is counted upon as a means of breaking the vice-like grip of the officials upon the unions. In order to enlist the membership in this holy war against the leaders the communists propose to organise all "militants" or active radicals within the respective unions. In this connection the demand that the unions repudiate their policy of expelling communists is receiving due attention. The communists also aim to secure the co-operation of all "progressives" or non-communist radicals and liberals with positive anti-administration sentiments in their efforts to dislodge the union leaders. Consequently they advocate "united front" alliances wherever possible. In this manner they hope to co-ordinate the efforts of all "rank and file" opposition groups in order to win away the masses in the unions from the "bureaucrats."

IV. DIFFERENT METHODS OF BORING FROM WITHIN

THE foregoing lengthy recital of the historical development and characteristic activities of the different boring from within elements has prepared the ground for their analysis and classification into types. It also makes it possible to allocate and evaluate the different modes of procedure resorted to by each type. Two classes of boring from within seem to have emerged in the radical endeavours to influence and transform the American trade union movement. As is evident from a perusal of previous chapters, they have been employed successively by the different radical and progressive factions.

a. Reliance on Propaganda

The post-war boring from within tactics of the socialists might be designated as penetration or even domination through propaganda. This form relies chiefly upon propaganda or education to secure results. Significant in this connection is the following news account in *The New Leader* report of a convention held in February, 1925, to determine whether the labour groups supporting La Follette should continue independent political action :

"Hillquit was asked to explain whether the Socialist Party would give up its organisation if his plan was carried. His answer was that the Socialist Party is *primarily an educational organisation* and that in event of the organisation of a Labour Party it would not nominate candidates against the Labour Party, but would support them." (Feb. 28, 1925, page 4. Author's italics.)

The Fabians are an outstanding group that followed this practice successfully.¹ In Britain we have another example in the guild socialists. In this country the single taxers have followed this practice with some success.

¹ Pease, *History of the Fabian Society*, chaps. iv and xii.

Consciously or otherwise the policies and tactics are premised on the proposition that the most effective manner of securing acceptance of certain principles is preferably by winning the confidence of the leadership or of influential persons, or, at least, by not antagonising them or incurring their enmity and outright opposition. Two effects are anticipated from this procedure. It will provide comparatively free access to the membership or followers who can be propagandised and converted to the cause. This step will, in turn, make it feasible for the leaders also to accept the principles and possibly undertake to bring about their realisation. It is a sort of gentle and soothing pressure mildly and inoffensively applied to leaders who originally were not hostile to the cause, but merely indifferent and indisposed to take the initiative. Propagandising the membership is a means of prodding on the half-willing leaders.

A second group subscribing to this type of boring from within believe in directing their propaganda to the actual interesting and converting of persons in influential positions. In this case propaganda among the masses is an incidental activity. By the support of leaders or persons otherwise strategically situated the principles will be carried through, or at least popularised, through the organisations and agencies with which the favourably placed individuals are affiliated. The conception is somewhat akin to the "great man" idea of social change and progress through superior minds strategically circumstanced. But the élite need enlightenment and this second propaganda group will provide it. The Fabians worked on this theory, whereas the American socialists are pursuing the policy of not antagonising the leaders, so that they will have a free hand with the membership. Of course, they are at the same time not disregarding any opportunity to convert labour leaders. Indeed during the post-war years they spent most of their energies in the effort to win the leaders to their cause. It is only since the decision of the unions not to pursue further independent political action

that they have directed their energies once more to propaganda among the membership. Every precaution is, however, taken not to alienate the leadership, the hope being that the membership will gradually express itself and thereby gently induce the leaders to alter their course. In the meantime, of course, socialist leaders will be keeping the issue before the trade union officials so that the latter will be approached from both fronts.

A presumption included in the idea of boring from within through propaganda is that when the work reaches fruition the leaders of the boring group, as the best qualified and experienced, will be consulted, or even entrusted with the planning and perhaps the execution of the programme when it is decided upon, and that their machinery will be utilised. Thus as the British labour movement accepted socialist doctrines it also turned to the Fabians and Independent Labour Party (I. L. P.) for counsel and technical guidance. Later it accepted their leadership so that Fabians and I. L. P.'s dominated the Labour Party Cabinet. During the recent spurt of independent political action in this country the socialists experienced a similar elevation. They had the political organisation and election machinery, as well as the experienced political campaigners and administrators. They were the political experts and were thoroughly conversant with the arguments and information back of the important issues. Not only that, but they had a superior grasp of the political situation. Consequently the trade unionists found it necessary to rely mostly upon the socialists. And that the socialists still retain the confidence of the trade union leaders with whom they associated in this political venture is admitted by their severest critics, the communists. In its decision on the "American Question", the enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International made the following observation: "Numerically this reformist (Socialist) party is very small, but it has considerable ideological influence amongst the trade union officials" (*The Daily Worker*, May 19, 1925).

In this country the single taxers antedated the socialists by over a quarter of a century in this tactical procedure. Originally they set out to dominate by outright control of the labour political movements. Henry George, following his meteoric rise in the famous 1886 New York mayoralty campaign and consequent loss of mass support, counselled his followers to concentrate exclusively on propaganda. And because the Democratic Party favoured free trade and was otherwise more in accord with single tax concepts they elected to align themselves with it. Henry George summed up his attitude in the following words: "I am not a political leader, and I do not aspire to be a political leader, not only for the reason that politics are not to my taste, but that I aspire to something much higher, a leadership of thought" (Speak, *The Single Tax and the Labour Movement*, pp. 146-147). A small group of irreconcilables, refusing to make concessions and fearing contamination, still support a separate party.

Domination through propaganda is the natural policy of groups placing their faith in achievement through persons strategically located. It likewise becomes the tactic of groups lacking a rank and file constituency as a vehicle for the furtherance of their cause. In the case of the Fabians it was the former consideration. The American socialists were caught in the latter predicament. Either through expulsions or because of apathy of former adherents the bulk of their members and followers had dwindled away. On the other hand the unions still have a hold on the masses. Militancy against union leaders is rather futile, unless there is a mass membership to bring pressure. Under such conditions it might be more feasible to cater to the union leaders and carry on peaceful propaganda. This decision is an acknowledgment that the party and cause are subordinate to and dependent upon the unions, and signalises boring from within by propaganda exclusively.

Of course, if the propaganda nets a large number of influential and strategically located converts, and a sub-

stantial mass following is also won to the cause, then the tactics may undergo a metamorphosis. With a constituency to fall back upon, the sponsors of the cause can afford to become aggressive and insistent. This fact is indicated by the history of the Independent Labour Party. As it gathered a larger following in the unions it became more assertive and domineering. On the other hand, a purely educational group which does not aspire to build a mass organisation hardly ever attempts to control the machinery of mass organisations or to dictate to them. The degree to which a propaganda organisation catering to the masses becomes aggressive is largely dependent upon its objective. If it is opportunist and stands ready to compromise, it will temper its militancy so as to avoid a break. But, if it fails to pursue a give and take attitude, it is bound to become isolated, unless it is sufficiently powerful to dominate the situation. This much is certain: a propaganda mass organisation must accelerate its militancy with its increase in following. It is doubtful whether masses can long be held in a purely propaganda organisation. A propaganda organisation can refrain from being aggressive only as long as it is satisfied with a small and very select following. The Fabians remained an exclusive group, but the I. L. P. aimed to become a mass organisation. Hence the latter increased its assertiveness with its ascendancy while the former remained a complacent educational group.

Should the Socialist Party regain its former following or one equally large, it would undoubtedly have to supplant its purely propaganda activity with demands on the labour movement. The degree of its assertiveness might be gauged by the opportunistic character of its objective, and by the personal relations between its leaders and the trade union leaders.

b. Reliance on Militancy

A movement that is uncompromising and ultra-revolutionary cannot long remain purely educational, even

though it has an exclusive following. Nor can it long avoid attacks from the organisations it seeks to penetrate or refrain from aggressively attacking the officials and other leaders. When the revolutionary radicals first undertook boring from within they, too, relied chiefly on propaganda. This was very likely a natural first step in the evolution of their tactics. Most of the union endorsements of amalgamation were obtained during this formative period. But a revolutionary element would hardly be satisfied with such intangible accomplishments or such mild procedure. Indeed the experience of the communists raises the question whether either an element consisting of the élite or a rank and file educated in militant and radical ideology can be held in an organisation and movement that contents itself with catering to the union officials and merely carrying on peaceful propaganda. Such elements seem to demand assertiveness and aggressive action, which necessitates challenging the authority of the officials and an organised determination to wrest control. The emphasis is domination through control rather than propaganda. Propaganda for the cause is intermingled with attacks on the leaders. Not uncommonly the latter overshadows the former. It is questionable whether the militant radicals could have been gathered within the Trade Union Educational League and retained for any long period by merely pursuing educational work for structural union changes. So mild a course would hardly satisfy a militant radical following. There were the socialist defectionists and the revolutionary radicals dissatisfied with the I. W. W. They did not need ideologic conversion. They were disgusted with the inaction or failure of the movements with which they had been affiliated. A purely educational organisation could not gratify their aspirations. They had to be shown that the conservatives would be attacked and that attempts would be made to dislodge them from their hold on the labour movement. The communist movement was the symbol for all these longings. Only a promise of a militant programme could

induce the revolutionary radicals to join the movement. That the T. U. E. L. succeeded in practically uniting the militant or revolutionary radicals is evident. This feat was accomplished by catering to their yearning for militant action. The latter is achieved by a personification of the issues. It is not sufficient to battle for a cause. The culprits who obstruct the progress of the cause must be assailed and if possible deposed. Ultimately the struggle resolves itself into an appeal to the rank and file to revolt against their leaders. As against a process of mere conversion there is the attempt at locking of horns. Strife for control ensues. The membership is appealed to as against the leaders.

We see, then, that boring from within for purely propaganda purposes may proceed peacefully and with a minimum of friction, but that boring from within for control automatically induces strife and invariably results in bitter controversy. When the socialists pursued the latter policy, they were regarded by the conservative unionists as a dangerous element to be checkmated and even exterminated. Since their change in tactics they are no longer regarded as a menace. Chiefly out of habit and because of a desire to appear consistent, the conservative unionists still attack socialism in their talks and writings. The Socialist Party and the socialists, however, are treated with much consideration. Having assumed the militant rôle formerly taken by the socialists, the communists are experiencing the treatment which was previously accorded the socialists. In the present case, because of war hysteria, and the consequent feeling that opponents must not be given quarter, the strife has led to a bitter campaign of extermination through expulsions, which generally results in isolation of the opposition. The expulsion policy even goes as far as to make the mere fact of being a communist a bar to membership in the organisation. In less extreme instances the opposition is merely quarantined and the faithful are warned against it.

Now the mere expulsion of insurgent leaders hardly

weakens the hold of the opposition upon its followers within the organisation. The labelled leaders and active followers are severed from the organisation. But their ejection may strengthen them with the membership since the average person is distrustful of his leaders and officials and is apt to have confidence in those who incur their enmity. Naturally the internal opposition is forced to operate underground, a fact which the communists admit.

"This ruthless campaign of expulsion and other forms of terrorism, which has reached its maximum in the wholesale and illegal unseating of delegates . . . has practically made the Trade Union Educational League an underground organisation in nearly every trade union in the country" (Foster, "Party Industrial Methods and Structure", *The Workers' Monthly*, June, 1925).

The disciples, particularly if they are active, must conceal their membership in the League and in the Workers' Party. At best they operate as free-lance radicals. They cannot, of course, assume a colourless position because they cater to the radical rank and file and would be branded renegades. Likewise they would not be furthering the cause. Hence they advocate the principles and policies of the extreme lefts but disclaim organic affiliation. If in power in local unions, they may permit the membership to endorse, or even contribute financially to the ostracised or heretical group. But in such cases they merely fulfill the mandate of the membership; individually they are not officially connected with the outcasts. Where they can make an alliance with persons who for other reasons oppose the administration they naturally will do so. In that event the open leadership will be placed in the hands of the non-communists. But these must be militantly anti-administration and must give the communists an opportunity to carry on their propaganda. Even this practice was challenged by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. They have deposed officials in subordinate units who have had the support of the communists (*Justice*, June, 1926, July 3, 11, 17, 1925).

As the labour movement is constituted at present it is questionable whether an opposition that seeks outright and uncompromising control can avoid isolation. It may not be definitely anathematised as heretical, but it cannot prevent being quarantined. During their period of militancy the socialists became isolated. While they were not subjected to wholesale expulsions many were expelled. Besides, no effort was spared to muzzle them. They were subjected to intolerant treatment and more drastic indignities. It was largely to stem their propaganda activities that many unions adopted constitutional amendments prohibiting political discussions at union meetings. It is only because circumstances were different then that discrimination against the socialists did not go to the limit. The predicament of the more assertive and domineering radicals even in those days, however, was similar to that of the present revolutionary radicals. De Leon complained that a conciliatory policy was futile and that an aggressive one could not escape isolation:

"We went into those unions, and when the labour faker came there with capitalist propositions, we rose and tried to teach the rank and file. The rank and file—not through dishonesty, Oh, no—the rank and file could not take our views; didn't dare to take our views, because in most of these unions there is a system of blackmail and brow-beating that the labour leaders exercise upon the men. For the sake of keeping their jobs, for the sake of not losing their sick and death benefit advantages, the men caved in; and when the labour faker gave the signal, those men voted as the labour faker dictated. Finally, when we were driving the labour faker to the corner, the split came. The conscientious borers from within then landed on the outside and have continued to bore from without, with the assistance of which alone can simultaneous boring from within be effective. On the other hand, those who stayed there, 'preserving the full sympathy of these unions', what have they got to congratulate themselves with, except candy sticks, resolutions that mean nothing, resolutions for collective ownership, resolutions this way and that way?—while in the meantime, every practical attempt on the part of the rank and file to improve itself continues to be run into the ground, the men divided among themselves, according as the capitalist interests of their various employers may dictate" (De Leon

and Harriman, "A Debate on the Tactics of the S. T. & L. A." *Toward Trade Unions*, 1900, p. 22).

Communist leaders seemed to have sensed that they were predestined to reap a similar fate. At any rate, after the break with the Farmer-Labour Party, Foster clearly saw the situation. In "An Open Letter to John Fitzpatrick" (*The Labour Herald*, January, 1924, p. 7) he makes the following statement:

"The Chicago Federation of Labour (which in this case means you), endorsed several of the planks in this radical programme. But it was quite evident that you would not make a militant fight for them. You gave them your sanction, that's about all. The idea of moving aggressively all over the country in behalf of them, and thus coming to a head-on collision with the Gompers machine, was foreign to your nature, unsustained as you are by any revolutionary conception. Through the working out of such a great organising campaign as I have described above, you might have been developed in spite of yourself, into a figure powerful enough to wreck the reactionary bureaucracy and then forced into a movement inevitably culminating in the reorganisation of the trade unions. But you will never carry through such a movement by direct advocacy of a programme of your own. This is because you are a regular of the regulars. You will not break completely with the official family and become an outcast, a disresponsible in the movement, a fate which every progressive leader must undergo at our present stage of development. You are determined to maintain your official standing in the labour movement, and especially to retain the presidency of the Chicago Federation of Labour. For you every tactical consideration depends upon that. . . ."

As was evidenced by the action of the "progressives" and the Farmer-Labour Party adherents, as soon as the situation reaches a breaking point those desiring to retain their standing within the unions must modify their insurgent position. This accounts for the withdrawal of many of the early adherents of the Trade Union Educational League. Likewise, the Farmer-Labour Party, as soon as the communists had captured the conference called by it, severed its connection and repudiated the proceedings. These elements that considered it imperative to

retain their official standing within the movement dared not co-operate with an outlawed minority. To have done so would have placed them in jeopardy of receiving like treatment, which would have made it impossible to work from within the fold. As minor officials holding responsible positions they could not afford to expose themselves. Their opponents, who held the whip hand, could have deposed them for disloyalty, if not actually expelled them outright. They either had to modify their position or destroy their chance of working within the movement. A union administration might tolerate mild criticism and advocacy of minor reforms, but is ruthless against extreme condemnation and agitation against itself. In their denunciation of such opposition labour leaders apply the opprobrious terms used by employers. They brand their opponents as agitators and trouble-makers. The Farmer-Labour Party had gone the limit in agitating for independent political action and concomitant issues. As the militant wage conscious unionists, their chief activity was to arouse the rank and file members to support their new point of view. Gradually they began to criticise the leaders. They also endorsed issues tabooed by the officials and by public opinion. Naturally the officials were incensed and fought back. The uncompromising position of the Farmer-Labourites and their aggressiveness had driven them close to the breaking point. Indeed they had taken the first step when they withdrew from the Conference for Progressive Political Action. They were very close to the edge of the precipice that borders on the abyss of isolation. How long they might have balanced themselves is a debatable question. Up to this point they had been pursuing a course that had historic precedents and the support of large numbers, a course that could not be condemned as un-American or contrary to union practice. So while they were regarded as non-conformists they were still within the pale. As long as they followed such a course they were fairly well fortified against expulsion and against deposition from their official positions. Had

they crossed the border in accepting communist leadership or co-operated for any length of time with the communists, they would have exposed themselves to what their enemies who had the whip hand in the unions were waiting for.

The least that could be said was that communism and its tactics were new in name and had no traditional standing in the labour movement or in the country. The dominant ideologies had, moreover, branded it as anathema. Upholders of such doctrines were heretics and could be discriminated against. Prevailing opinion regarded them as outcasts. Sanction for expulsion or other drastic action was on the side of the leaders, and there was no room for speculation as to what action the higher union officials would take. They were on record. The course for the Farmer-Labourites was a clear one. Accepting the leadership of the communists or continuing close co-operation with them would have meant severing themselves officially and otherwise from the labour movement. Refusing to go the limit made it possible for them to retain standing and continue working within as "bad boys" that needed watching.

Thus to bore from within and still retain a standing in the movement, militancy must be tempered and circumscribed. As long as the causes championed are not regarded as too irrelevant and have a tradition, even undue assertiveness may be overlooked. Enangling alliances with causes too unpopular must be shunned. And the attacks on officials and leaders must be temperate and considerate. The aim to replace them and to dominate by controlling the machinery must not be too insistent. Any other procedure invariably leads to absolute excommunication. Naturally neither agency nor prescribed standard exists for gauging whether an opponent has violated these rules. The question is decided by those in control and by the prevailing but uninformed public opinion, within and without the union. The advantage, of course, is with the administration or "ins". Not infrequently militant boring

from within groups become so isolated that they are forced to bore from the outside. That is, their open leaders must operate from the outside. They have no direct access to the unions. Direction of their forces must be carried on through sympathisers or secret adherents. While not a dual union, as branded by their opponents, they operate on the outside in influencing the members of the various organisations. Their aim is not to supplant the existing unions with their economic and protective functions but to capture them. Their dualism is in the nature of setting up a rival political organisation to that of the officials. In the case of the latter the union machinery is also their political medium. That is why they consider the political organisation of their opponents a dual union.

c. Other Limitations of Militancy

The disastrous outcome of the conference in 1923 at which the Farmer-Labour Party abandoned the communists raised the question within the fold of the latter of the extent to which they ought to press their uncompromising schemes for dominating by outright control. Should they indiscriminately apply this policy to friend and foe? Ought they to alienate their sympathisers even where they have an opportunity to work with them? Should they not, by not unduly forcing the issue of control with their friends and thereby compelling them to run for cover, avoid becoming completely isolated? The recent "Party Discussion" in the communist press centred about this policy. The communist movement was divided into two warring factions. It seems that the Foster group favoured moderation in co-operation with sympathetic elements. His conception of the "united front" was to work with "progressive" and radical non-communist groups on a give-and-take basis. The faction led by C. E. Ruthenberg (former prominent socialist and now Secretary of the Workers' Party) took the position that the communists must force issues and strive to control at the risk of alienating sympathisers and friends. This group

won the day and the communists became completely isolated. Then the Foster faction attempted to apply the logic of this tactic. They held that the time was not ripe for a mass labour party. Therefore, the Workers' Party should cease seeking alliances with non-communist groups and devote its energies to carrying on communist propaganda. This is a very consistent position in a movement that is absolutist in its policies and tactics. An organisation that persists in forcing issues to the breaking point even with its friends and collaborators is bound to lose those friends. Under the circumstances it might be best to pursue independent propaganda activities and refrain from seeking alliances. Indeed it is questionable whether any but a purely propaganda organisation can inexorably refrain from compromising or opportunistic practices. Certainly no organisation can follow this course if it desires to enlist the co-operation of other ideologic groups. The difficulty lies in knowing where to draw the line. The opportunist is apt to be too conciliatory and thereby unwittingly undermine his principles. The revolutionist is likely to be too dogmatic and thereby completely isolate himself. No one has yet discovered a formula that completely demarks the happy mean. Both types must take the chance at the risk of error and perhaps disaster. But it is certain that only propaganda organisations can avoid compromise absolutely. Movements or organisations seeking to direct or influence practical affairs must make concessions. Unless they do, it is impossible for them to have relations with other groups. When their principles forbid them to co-operate with other groups on practical matters they must strive for absolute control. Then they lack the resilience and adaptation that are prerequisite and indispensable in organisations dealing with the daily routine affairs of life. Automatically they either vanish or are transformed into propaganda sects. In the latter case they can afford to be as rigid and persistent in maintaining their doctrines intact as their perseverance and tenacity enables them.

The communists seem to be recognising this inevitable outcome of a too inflexible policy. Discussing the predicament of the Workers' Party, Foster makes this significant observation:

"The splits attendant upon the growth and development of the labour party and LaFollette movements also served, in their later stages, to break off many valuable connections of the left wing in the trade unions. The split at the Chicago, July 3, 1923, conventions, when the Federated Farmer-Labour Party was formed, was especially disastrous. This split, caused primarily by the weakness of the Fitzpatrick group, detached from our following many valuable progressive elements in the rank and file and among the lesser officialdom of the unions. Other labour party splits had similar results. The fact that we had to make open warfare against the LaFollette candidacy, which was an historic necessity of the situation, also caused us to break with many valuable elements in the trade unions who, while willing to follow our lead on many issues, were not ideologically advanced enough to see through the sophistries of LaFollettism and when they broke with us over LaFollette, they broke with practically our whole programme. The comparative defeat of the LaFollette movement, as measured by the extravagant hopes held out by its leaders also tended to create an air of defeatism among the masses and to make them less responsive to the left wing programme."

Foster also acknowledges a similar experience in connection with their trade union activities:

"Within the past two years the influence of the League [Trade Union Educational League] has, in certain respects, sensibly diminished in the unions. It is true that during this period the League has won many substantial victories. Notable cases in point are the splendid showings made in the recent elections of the Miners' and Carpenters'. But the movement undoubtedly lacks the broad sweep that it once had. Especially has the League largely lost the leadership over the so-called progressive elements which played such an important part in its early activities. The masses in the unions are not responding to its slogans as they once did. There is a strong tendency for the League in its organised manifestations—local groups, national conferences, etc.—to consist merely of communists and their closest sympathisers. In other words, the league is experiencing a sharp period of isolation."

As a guide for the future a direct warning is given against alienating those who, though dissatisfied with the conduct of the labour movement and seeking to change it, are non-communists:

"In the furtherance of our trade union work we must . . . also undertake the task of developing a progressive bloc in the trade unions of those elements who are discontented with the policies of the reactionary bureaucracy but are not yet ripe enough to be brought into the League or under its immediate influence.

"A characteristic of the labour movement is the utter spinelessness and lack of leadership and organisation among these so-called progressive elements in the trade unions. Although more or less in opposition to the old bureaucracy, they have no real programme of their own, and they lack the ideological development to follow that of the League.

"The situation presents a problem and an opportunity for our party. This group comprises great numbers of the rank and file and smaller officialdom. It would be a major mistake for us to confine ourselves to a campaign of vilification against these progressives for their weakness and to abandon them as hopeless by simply lumping them together with the reactionaries as part of a united front opposition to us. That would not be Leninism. It would be sectarianism. Our policy must be to stimulate the reactionary bureaucracy controlling the unions. For this purpose we must give it a programme and organisation. We must put out such united front slogans as will rally these elements, and then we must find the means to connect with them organisationally and to exercise the maximum amount of leadership possible over them to draw them closer to our party . . ." (Foster, "Party Industrial Methods and Structure", *The Workers' Monthly*, June, 1925).

The bitter factional dispute which resulted from the attempt to diagnose the isolation and loss of prestige of the communists was carried to the sessions of the Communist International for adjudication. After hearing both sides and otherwise informing itself, the Executive Committee frankly acknowledged that the dominant forces in the labour movement "succeeded in isolating the communists from the masses in the election campaign. . . ." Its outline of a plan for future procedure is naturally an indirect

criticism of past tactics. Thus the American communists are admonished not to abate their persistence for the founding of a labour party. But the warning is pronounced that:

"The communists need not demand nor even expect that the labour party will immediately be a revolutionary, a radical party of the workers, in which the communists will have to take the lead. The communists should clearly realise that the formation of a labour party signifies for the affiliated workers only the *beginning* of their political emancipation and of the development of their class consciousness. It is very possible that in America, at first there will be for a time at the head of the labour party similar reformist labour traitors to those in England, or even worse. Nevertheless, the formation of such a party may for a time represent a definite step forward in the American labour movement, and the Communist Party is obliged to participate in this party, if only the latter permit in a sufficient degree freedom of criticism and agitation by the affiliated organisations.

"Why must the communists act thus? Because it is their task to remain in closest contact with the masses in order to influence the latter continually in a revolutionary sense. However, mere agitation and propaganda, even the best, is not sufficient for revolutionary influence of the masses. For this purpose the masses require their own revolutionary *experience*. They can obtain essential elements of this experience in the labour party, even though the latter be directed by reformists. In that case the masses, after their disappointments, will learn to know the treasonable rôle of the petty bourgeois reformists, and that is very important. Furthermore, they will gain valuable experience in the independent political organisations of the working class.

"The ideas of *class* and *class consciousness* are to be inculcated as deeply as possible in the masses of the American working class by the preparatory campaign of the communists for the formation of a labour party. This is not to be done abstractly, for it would not succeed in this manner, but in immediate connection with the most urgent everyday demands of the workers. The communists are to induce the working masses to present their demands to the reformists and to the leaders of the LaFollette organisations and to call upon them for joint action with the Workers' Party. Should they accept or reject such proposals—sooner or later the traitors will expose themselves. After every such instance, the masses of workers will, however, more and more clearly realise the

necessity of an independent class party of their own. And if they do not yet recognise the Communist Party as this class party they will still feel that the slogan of a labour party is the consequence of all their everyday demands, and thus this slogan gains vital mass power.

"The fight will require persevering energy and much patience. . . .

"After the formation of the labour party, what the executive emphasised a year ago should be kept in mind, that it is not advisable to split off a left wing from the labour party as soon as possible in order to transform this split-off section into a mass Communist Party. We must rather endeavour to win increasing masses in the labour party for the revolutionary point of view and to let this left wing grow within the labour party and at the same time to take the most advanced and revolutionary elements into the Workers' Party. This policy is to be observed both prior to the formation of the labour party and subsequently" ("Decision of the Communist International on the American Question," *The Daily Worker*, May 19, 1925),

The recent official pronouncements of the Executive of the Workers' Party and its convention held in Chicago the latter part of August, 1925, would indicate that the communists are taking steps to modify their policies and tactics so as not to remain completely isolated. The decision of the Communist International, which was really a body of unalterable instructions, has been accepted, and future plans are being mapped out accordingly.²

² See particularly: "Resolution on Bolshevisation of the Party", *The Daily Worker*, July 30, 1925; "The Present Situation and the Immediate Tasks of the Party", *Ibid.*, July 28, 1925; also issues of *The Daily Worker* for August 27th to 30th, reporting the convention proceedings.

V. DUAL UNION TYPES

DUAL unionism as a radical tactic has often been confused with dual unionism undertaken because of practical rather than ideologic differences among trade unionists. Like all animated phrases born of controversy, dual unionism has many connotations. In this country it is pre-vaillingly and erroneously regarded as an exclusive germ of radicalism, and because immigrants have been the chief constituents and leaders of a few outstanding dual unions it is classed as of foreign origin. This confusion has obscured the existence of two distinct functional types of dual unions. One might be termed ideologic dual unionism and the other opportunistic dual unionism. The aim of the former is to set up a parallel labour movement with a radical philosophy that would ultimately displace the conservative movement. Although the most spectacular and sensational, it is not, from a practical point of view, the most important. Undue weight has been attached to its significance not only because of its ability to keep itself in the limelight, but because the A. F. of L. in order to meet the assertive contentions of the radicals centred its attacks chiefly on this form of dual unionism. This policy is, of course, natural toward unions that aim to supersede the A. F. of L.

The A. F. of L. concept of union jurisdiction has, however, introduced another form of dualism that has attained considerable stability and generally functions as successfully as the A. F. of L. unions. This opportunistic dual unionism is an outgrowth of practical differences. Generally these rival unions do not differ ideologically, although at times there has been a difference in this respect. In either case, however, the prime motivating issues that induced separation were practical rather than philosophic disagreements. This distinction becomes evi-

dent upon an analysis of the A. F. of L. theoretical and applied versions of dual unionism. Through its various chartered internationals it claims absolute or monopolistic jurisdiction over all wage workers in this country. Hence all unions not affiliated with it are considered dual unions, or without the pale of legitimate unionism. In practice, however, the line has not been drawn quite so rigidly. Thus the railroad Brotherhoods are recognised as belonging to the family of regular unions. They, of course, are older than the A. F. of L. itself, and do not differ from it ideologically, and although two of the Brotherhoods¹ have cut into the jurisdiction of two Federation unions, they do not systematically challenge the prescribed jurisdiction of the A. F. of L. and in general their members are distinctly different occupationally.²

Since so many of the dual unions are composed of groups that either withdrew from the A. F. of L., or from one of its affiliated units, they are also classed as secessionist. Indeed, these two terms have become practically synonymous. Thus the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovel and Dredgemen was ordered to merge its identity with the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers. It refused to comply and is operating independently. In the eyes of the Federation, it is a dual and secessionist union although it had previously been recognised as a separate entity within the A. F. of L. Likewise, the nuclei of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers were local unions that withdrew from the United Garment Workers. Therefore this organisation is both a dual and secessionist union.

This double designation is not applicable to a large number of non-A. F. of L. unions even according to official definition. There are still a few purely secessionist

¹ The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen accepts switchmen, thereby cutting into the jurisdiction of the Switchmen's Union of North America, and the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees claims jurisdiction over certain members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

² "American Federation of Labour", *History, Encyclopedia Reference Book*, 1919, p. 341.

unions, and a rather large group of purely dual unions. The National Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association has withdrawn from the Federation in protest of the latter's opposition to ship subsidy. It is now a secessionist union, but would not be classed as a dual union unless the A. F. of L. should either grant a charter to a newly organised union, or, what is more probable, extend the jurisdiction of another and occupationally closely allied union over this class of workers.³ In that event it would also be classed as a dual union. Likewise, the Order of Railway Expressmen, which was formed independently but consists of a class of workers who have been assigned to the jurisdiction of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, is considered a dual union even though hardly any of its members were ever members of the A. F. of L. union. Therefore, outside of the Railroad Brotherhoods, all unions not affiliated with the A. F. of L. are regarded by it either as secessionist or dual unions, or both.⁴ In practice the A. F. of L. has been friendly with some, tolerated others, and fought still others most bitterly. Its efforts in suppressing dual and secessionist unions have usually been as unsuccessful as the attempts of the radical dual unions in supplanting it.

In other countries where the national federations of unions do not undertake to delimit the jurisdictions of their affiliated units, opportunistic dual unionism is practically non-existent, in the sense of the existence of recognised and outlaw organisations in the same field. No matter how overlapping the jurisdictions, or even if the unions are directly competitive, they are still admitted to membership in the National Federation of Unions. Thus in England the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, the Railway Clerks' Association, and

³ Since this was written the Stationary and Operating Engineers' Union has been granted jurisdiction over marine engineers.

⁴ "American Federation of Labour", *History, Encyclopedia Reference Book*, 1919, under "Secession and Suspension", "Penalty", "Secession Movements", and "Jurisdiction Disputes".

the National Union of Railwaymen are all affiliated with the British Trade Union Congress notwithstanding that the National Union of Railwaymen as an industrial union includes members coming under the jurisdiction of the other two organisations. The overlapping and paralleling of jurisdiction in the railroad industry is, to be sure, more extensive and complicated than in other trades and industries.⁵ In any case, however, since the national federations are not concerned with the jurisdictional differences of their affiliated units and do not prescribe the limitations of their activities in a trade or industry there is little occasion for opportunistic dual unionism. A union can cut into the jurisdiction of every other union and still be a member of the national federation of unions. Likewise a group differing over practical matters in a national union can withdraw from it and still remain affiliated with the national federation. Hence, contrary to prevailing opinion in other countries dual unionism is primarily of the ideologic variety, for it is only when groups of workers differ in philosophy from the dominant movement that they form themselves into separate unions and refrain from affiliating with it.

a. Misconception of Ideologic Dual Unionism

The fact that dual unionism is a universal and worldwide characteristic seems to have been lost sight of in this country. A false impression prevails that it is peculiar to the United States, and it is largely attributed to the non-English speaking immigrant population. As a corollary to this latter sentiment is the one that only radicals sponsor dual unions. As a matter of fact, all European countries, and some of the American countries, also have their dual unionism. This foreign dual unionism is analogous to our ideologic dual union attempts in that the separatist organisations differ ideologically from the dominant and regular movement. Such a struggle for

⁵ "Directory of Trade Unions", in the *British Labour Year Book*, 1924, pp. 433-444.

ideologic domination has manifested itself in dual unionism throughout the labour movements of the world. The foreign situation differs from the condition of ideologic dual unionism in this country in that its adherents are native workers and that dual unionism is usually the sponsor of more conservative doctrines than the dominant or regular movement.⁶ Also, in other countries the bulk of dual union membership consists of Catholic workers and the dual unions operate under the benediction of the church. It seems that the determination as to whether the radical or the conservative union is to be the dual organisation depends upon which group secures control of the regular movement. In continental Europe the socialists and anarchists founded the first unions and stamped the movement with their revolutionary philosophy, which was also tinged with atheism and anti-churchism. Hence the dual movement is conservative and very largely Catholic. In Germany the non-socialist unionists have separate national federations. The Federation of Christian Trade Unions consists of the Catholic workers, and the Federation of Hirsch-Dunker Union "consists of unions not based on the class struggle, and devoted to the theory of identity of interests between employer and workers." On the other hand, the dominant national organisation—the Federation of German Trade Unions—is socialist. In Belgium the dominant organisation is the Trade Union Commission, socialist in philosophy, and its rival is the Federation of Christian Unions, sponsored by the Catholics. The situation is quite similar in most European countries;⁷ the conservative workers, largely Catholic, operate in separate and generally antagonistic unions. As a rule, the difference is over ideology, the dominant unions, consisting mostly of non-Catholic workers, being socialist or syndicalist, whereas the Catholic workers resemble more the "pure and simple" trade unionism of our country. Furthermore, just as the so-

⁶ Since the World War, Germany and France have witnessed a dual union movement among the radical unionists.

⁷ *American Labour Year Book*, 1923-24, section xii.

cialist workers have their International Federation of Trade Unions, so the conservative workers are also banded together internationally in the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions.⁸

Even in the Protestant British United Kingdom a small group of Catholic workers also maintain separate unions. "An invidious feature, in which the textile industry is unique, is the appearance during the present century, as the result of a quarrel as to 'political action', of half a dozen separate local Trade Unions of weavers, largely Roman Catholic, at one time in the Lancashire Federation of Protective Societies. These, which are neither numerous nor of extensive membership, remain outside the Amalgamated Association of Weavers, and are watchful critics of any proposals, at the Trade Union Congress (to which they do not seek admission) or elsewhere, that offend the Roman Catholic Church (notably any suggestion of 'Secular Education' or educational changes deemed inimical to the Roman Catholic schools). There is a National Conference of Catholic Trade Unionists having similar objects."⁹

In Canada a similar situation is found. Although the unions of the United States operate there, and are largely officered by Irish Catholics, the French-Canadian Catholics under the auspices of church dignitaries have since 1912 been organising themselves into separate unions. Perhaps they have been led to this course because the Canadian labour movement, although affiliated with the United States, is largely dominated by British Protestants. At any rate, "during the year 1920 the national and Catholic unions have made progress, there having been an increase of forty-one branches, recorded, fourteen of which were established in Montreal. In 1919 the number of unions and subordinate syndicates was given at eighty-three. At the close of 1920 there were 124 branches,

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1923-24, pp. 288-289; 1925, pp. 268-270.

⁹ Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, Revised Edition, 1920, p. 478, note 1.

comprising a total reported membership of 45,000, an increase of 10,000 over that reported for the previous year. This year the Third Conference of National and Catholic Unions decided upon the formation of a permanent federation known as the National Federation of Catholic Workers of Canada. Most of the affiliated unions confine their membership only to adherents of the Roman Catholic faith. But a small minority are called neutral because membership is not confined to workmen of any particular creed." Likewise most of these unions have adopted for their "guidance the teachings and directions of the Roman Catholic Church as contained in the encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII, and which was subsequently laid down as fundamental rules by Pope Pius X." At the second conference of National and Catholic Unions in 1919 another difference between these unions and the others was emphasised: "The . . . convention expressed the view that the time had arrived for all Canadian workmen to get rid of foreign or American interference in the management of union affairs, and appealed to all Catholic workmen in particular to group themselves into self-governing bodies fully consistent with their national and religious aims."¹⁰ This policy has naturally brought the older unions into conflict with the Catholic and nationalistic unions. The Committee on Canadian Affairs of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders, in a report to its 1924 convention, discusses this question in the following manner:

"The fight for the labour movement in Canada has been much aggravated by the formation of societies known as the National Catholic Syndicate and the Canadian National Union. Both of these organisations are used by the employers to defeat organised labour. These organisations are of national scope and wield a large influence on certain sections of the workers of Canada, thereby making imperative that an active campaign be undertaken to bring about the better organisation of the bookbinders and bindery women of Canada.

¹⁰ "Tenth Annual Report on Labour Organisation in Canada, for 1920", Department of Labour, pp. 39-50.

We are glad to report that in spite of the efforts of the National Catholic Syndicate to organise our people in Montreal, Local Union No. 91 more than holds its own in that city" (Proceedings, 1924).

The Mexican labour movement reports similar undertakings by the Catholic church. Since the Carranza and Obregon revolutions when the labour movement of Mexico passed under control of socialists and anarchists, the Catholic church there has fostered the separate organisation of Catholic workers.¹¹ With the advent of Fascismo in Italy it too undertook to found its own labour movement because of ideological differences.¹² Thus practically every country with a labour movement finds that movement divided on ideologic grounds. This country with its radical dual unionism has but shared the common experience, the difference being that in this country ideologic dual unionism is synonymous with radical dual unionism, whereas in other countries ideologic dual unionism is championed by the more conservative labour groups.

b. Opportunist Dual Unionism

Although numerically greater than the ideologic dual unions, the opportunistic or non-doctrinaire dual unions have practically escaped attention. These latter exercise far greater influence than the former and have proved pre-eminently more successful. Generally these two types are confused and mostly classed as radical dual unionism. The distinction between the two as has already been indicated is rather simple. The former is an outgrowth of a struggle for ideologic control and domination. Opportunist dual unionism, on the other hand, is an outcome of practical disagreements over policies and tactics rather than ultimate principles. It often happens that the separation is a result of friction and hostility between leaders, general discontent of members, or merely the fact that a group of workers happened to organise separately and

¹¹ *American Labour Year Book*, 1925, pp. 371-373.

¹² H. C. McLean, "Labour Wages and Unemployment in Italy"; Department of Commerce Report, *Trade Inf. Bull.*, No. 337.

saw no particular reason for affiliating with the existing union. Occasionally both unions sprang up simultaneously, each claiming priority. These opportunist dual unions do not differ in aim and aspiration from the unions they parallel. Neither group has any ultimate aims, and both are usually wage-conscious or business unions. A few dual unions that are an outgrowth of immediate practical considerations happen to have also subscribed to an ideology that differed from the older unions. For various reasons that will be discussed presently they are wont to stress this difference. In many cases radicals lead these secession groups since they are the more experienced and articulate opponents, whereas the separation was brought about because of practical considerations. Then, too, the leaders of the older unions encountering any opposition immediately brand it as "radical".

Coupled with the notion that most dual unions subscribe to a radical philosophy or differ ideologically with the rival union affiliated with the American Federation of Labour is another equally erroneous one that the American labour movement is highly co-ordinated and federated. This is the ideal of the Federation, but it still remains to be realised. The ideologic dual unionists and the Railroad Brotherhoods are generally considered the only effective and substantial group outside the American Federation of Labour. The impression seems to prevail that at most one radical union parallels the corresponding conservative American Federation of Labour union. The available scattered data, however, substantiates general observation that in many industries there are so-called independent unions that operate with fair success, and differ only on inconsequential matters from their rivals in the Federation. Thus, a study of "Unionism in the Textile Industry" (*American Labour Year Book*, 1921-22, pp. 155-162), by Robert W. Dunn, is distinctly illustrative. He lists "three major unions claiming national jurisdiction over the entire industry. Of these, the United Textile Workers is the only one affiliated with the A. F. of L."

Under "Unions Claiming Jurisdiction Over Part of the Industry—a Branch or Craft", he lists ten separate organisations. Thus thirteen unions operate on a national basis in this industry. In addition Mr. Dunn lists twelve "Independent Local Unions with no National Craft, Branch or Industrial Affiliation". This enumeration, he indicates, is incomplete. Those familiar with the trade union situation know this is not an exceptional instance. The shoe industry is quite similarly situated. There are a number of unions that operate on a national scale, and the local organisations are innumerable. Nearly all, including the International Boot and Shoe Workers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labour, open their unions to all classes of workers. Only a few are founded on craft lines.¹³

The railroad industry and many other industries present fairly similar conditions, as indicated by a perusal of the "Directory of Trade and Industrial Unions Not Affiliated with the A. F. of L.", contained in the *American Labour Year Book*, 1921-22, and a study of the list of unions not affiliated with the A. F. of L. in the *International Labour Directory* (1923), issued by the International Labour Office. Neither of these directories are complete as their compilers will acknowledge. Almost every city of consequence has several separate unions of musicians, teamsters, barbers, bakers and other trades of a local nature, which are not listed in these directories. Only an infinitesimal fraction of these independent unions differ from the American Federation of Labour unions in philosophy. They fall under the opportunist dual unionism classification and present to the urge for unity in the American labour movement a challenge that is more menacing than is the ideologic dual unionism.

¹³ See Galster, *The Labour Movement in the Shoe Industry*, chaps. viii, ix, and x.

VI. CONDITIONS FOSTERING DUAL UNIONISM

a. Conditions Making for Ideologic Dual Unionism

As has already been inferred the chaotic status of trade unions coupled with the entrenchment of the conservatives in the more substantial unions, explains the prompting to radical, ideologic, dual unionism in this country. To the German radicals it seemed unnatural that unions should not subscribe to revolutionary working class philosophy. In continental Europe, where the labour movement was launched and fostered by disciples of the First International, this view was taken for granted. In Germany at that time the socialist political movement had made considerable headway, and dominated the lagging trade union movement. In addition the German and non-English speaking unions in this country were either socialist or anarchist. With the American workers poorly organised the Germans usually found themselves with other non-English speaking workers in unorganised shops, trades and industries. The radicals who were in the forefront in organising their fellow countrymen availed themselves of this opportunity for planting their doctrines among the masses. The few German unions that were not officially committed to radicalism were at least sympathetic, and many of their members were avowed radicals. Thus the German workers, possessing previous industrial experience and leadership, and being predominant in various trades, industries or communities, organised, parallel to the English speaking movement, a labour movement of their own subscribing to radical ideologies. Very often they aided the former in its efforts at organisation, and not infrequently took it under their own wing. For a time, indeed, the German labour movement excelled the English speaking. It thus became not uncommon for unions of the same trade or industry, although generally controlling

different shops, to function independently. The situation gave confidence and power to the radicals whose movement at least equalled that of the conservative unionists. This state of affairs led to feverish proselyting activity by the radicals. Moreover, since the ideal of unity had not developed and no union could claim absolute control, it was not considered a sacrilege if in a clash of factions the losing group withdrew and set up a separate union.

As the country developed industrially the existence of independent or separate unions claiming jurisdiction over the same class of workers in a trade or industry became nation-wide. Not many organisations were in a position to dominate the situation. Indeed, in the closing three decades of the nineteenth century there were even several national federations of unions, the two most prominent rivals being the Knights of Labour and the American Federation of Labour. Unions were cropping up promiscuously while others were as rapidly fading out of the scene. No individual or group of organisations had a particularly convincing claim to permanency and continuity. Even national federations like the National Labour Union, and Industrial Congress, had come and gone. And when the Knights of Labour was disintegrating it was not yet certain that the A. F. of L. would show more permanency than its predecessors, or its dwindling rival, whose most substantial unions it was inducing to secede in order to affiliate with it. To impulsive men of action, daring and imagination, smarting through defeat from autocratic manipulations when on the threshold of victory, the founding of rival unions and finally a complete dual movement was not as impracticable an adventure as to make it unthinkable or visionary. It was a fair gamble whether a number of national unions might not be weaned away from the A. F. of L., nor was it improbable that some of the unions still affiliated with the Knights of Labour and at that time flirting with the Federation could be won over. Indeed a number of powerful unions were not wholly unsympathetic to the Socialist Trade and

Labour Alliance (S. T. and L. A.) and the I. W. W. Then there was the prospect of splitting many unions as well as of drawing away the more militant radicals. Nor was the No Man's Land of the unorganised a negligible quantity. An additional encouragement was the unrivalled success of the German radical unions. Under such conditions of flux it can hardly be charged that the radicals were unduly capricious and impractical in encouraging the formation of rival unions and finally of an out-and-out dual union movement to supersede the existing unions that would not subscribe to their doctrines.

The failure of this undertaking does not, as is prevailingly assumed, prove that conditions were not propitious for radical philosophic dual unionism. On the contrary it is a clear instance of the case in which a certain type of leadership senses conditions accurately but muffs the opportunity by impracticable strategy which either dissipates the movement or diverts its course, thereby preventing it from achieving its original objective. In other words, if the revolutionary radicals, with their purely ephemeral and crusading propagandist notions of subordinating immediate needs of the workers to ultimate ideals had not gotten control of philosophic dual unionism, it is more than probable that this country would now be situated like most industrial countries which have two distinctly separate and substantial labour movements, one radical and the other conservative. Conditions were opportune, but the leadership and strategy were faulty. Of course, the failure of ideologic dual unionism has not cleared the country of dual unions. Their extent and characteristics are described in the succeeding pages. Nor is it positively proven that this country has seen the last of ideologic dual unions. This question is discussed in chapter xii.

b. Conditions Making for Opportunist Dual Unionism

The early opportunist dual unions were also a result of sectional divergences attributable to the weakness of

the labour movement. Groups of workers in a locality organised locals for a particular territory. As time went on these would begin to overlap and friction would arise. In some instances, this would lead to amalgamation. In others it would result in the rival unions continuing independently. The coal miners present an example of successful amalgamation of scattered unions. Sectional unions existed in this industry up to 1888. Some of these even extended their operations on national lines, but most of them covered a state or regional coal area. In 1888 the scattering organisations of coal miners and labourers fused into The National Progressive Union of Miners and Mine Labourers. There still remained, however, National District Assembly 135, which was the national coal miners' union of the Knights of Labour. The anxiety felt for the welding of the separate unions into one union for each industry is illustrated by the following telegram: ¹

"NEW YORK, Dec. 5, 1888.

"To the Joint Convention of Miners and Mine Labourers, Columbus, Ohio:

"The American Federation of Labour congratulates you upon the progress enabling you to meet on common ground in the interest of your fellow toilers. I urge you to take the next step necessary to success—amalgamation. Unite the miners and mine labourers of the whole country in one grand organisation. Remember, your present opportunities do not often occur; do not allow them to pass; the man who dares to stand as an obstacle, brush him aside. May the anticipations of your sanguine members be surpassed.

"SAMUEL GOMPERS,

"President American Federation of Labour."

Finally in 1890 National Trade Assembly 135 also was prevailed upon to unite with the National Progressive Union into the United Mine Workers.² While most trades or industries underwent similar experiences they did not all achieve like results. The textile and shoe industries are cases in point. In these industries separate

¹ Chris Evans, *History of United Mine Workers of America*, vol. i, pp. 397-398.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i, chaps. xxii, xxix, xxxiii; vol. ii, chap. i.

unions were founded with the beginning of organisation, and some of them have persisted up to the present. Since only one of the unions is chartered by the A. F. of L. and given complete jurisdiction over the entire industry, the others are regarded as dual unions. Thus the United Textile Workers of America, founded in 1901, is accepted by the A. F. of L. as the only bona fide union. But it did not meet with the success of the United Mine Workers. One of the unions which participated in the formation of the United Textile Workers immediately seceded and is still operating under the name "American Federation of Textile Operatives", confining its activities to New England cotton-mill workers. "The backbone of the present federation consists of the local unions of Fall River and New Bedford. These unions were never quite happy within the fold of the United Textile Workers and early quarrelled with its leadership and policies. The difference between the Fall River and New Bedford seceders and the United Textile Workers were not differences over ultimate policies, or theoretical radicalism, or conservatism. They were issues of local autonomy as against centralised power and high per capita tax as against a low taxation for the national office. Personal spites and counterspites also figured in these withdrawals, as well as an undercurrent of difference over the issue of craft versus industrial unionism. The United Textile Workers took the broader stand on this point while the long established craft amalgamations of Massachusetts generally admitted that they would be satisfied if they could get their own cotton mills organised without sending their dues out of town to be eaten up in carrying on agitation in distant fields. . . . The federation is essentially 'safe and sane'. It is far from aggressive in carrying on agitation and education among the workers, and is largely dominated by a group of first generation English immigrants, trained in the British tradition of craft amalgamations. These leaders take an extraordinary interest in securing benefits for the workers through state legislation. In this respect

they appear to be, in a sense, more conservative than the United Textile Workers, some of whose leaders speak contemptuously of the political efforts of the New Bedford and Fall River unions and boast of the results secured through the direct economic action of the United Textile Workers" (Robert W. Dunn, *op. cit.*).

The third union, the second rival of the United Textile Workers, the Amalgamated Textile Workers, although founded in 1919, also consists of local unions that had organised themselves independently in areas where the United Textile Workers had either ceased functioning or had not functioned at all. "In the beginning the Amalgamated was much less a secessionist organisation than the federation just discussed. The bodies of workers sending delegates to the organising convention were not, in the main, seceded locals of the United Textile Workers. Lawrence, for example, was an entirely new and independent industrial local. Passaic was independent. The Paterson group was largely recruited from the ranks of the declining Workers' International Industrial Union, and of the Hudson County Silk Workers of New York City. The Amalgamated Textile Workers was established largely through the impetus to organisation gained through these independent strike movements, the refusal of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers to consider an expansion of their jurisdiction to the textile field, and a general feeling on the part of the silk locals especially, that the United Textile Workers was thoroughly reactionary, as the United Garment Workers had proved to be in the clothing industry. In every town and city from which delegates came to organise the Amalgamated, there had been at one time or another a local of the United Textile Workers. In some instances they still existed, but, as in Paterson, included only selected groups of the most easily organised skilled workers. In Lawrence the United Textile Workers had started locals time and again, including almost every craft, but none had been effectually maintained. The result of this was to create in the minds of

the workers disorganisation and lack of purpose in the face of needed action. A common feeling against the tactics of the United Textile Workers rather than against its form of philosophy or organisation helped to bring the most progressive elements in a number of the big textile centres into the new Amalgamated" (Robert W. Dunn, *op. cit.*).

This description is characteristic of the founding of most dual unions. Either they had organised independently and continued refusing to recognise the monopolistic jurisdiction of the A. F. of L. union, or they had founded a separate independent union after the Federation union had failed to function, and had thereby lost their confidence. This account applies to the dual unions in the hotel and restaurant, cigar and tobacco, boot and shoe, and men's garment industries as well as to the railroad and other trades or industries.

In addition to the dual unions that came about by being organised either at approximately the same time as the A. F. of L. union, or later but in fields where it no longer functioned, there is the popular type of dual union consisting of locals or members that have seceded from the A. F. of L. or existing union. "As early as 1874 the Bricklayers' National Union was confronted with a complete dual organisation, called the Order of United American Bricklayers, which was formed by secession from the National Union, and had for its secretary a former secretary of the National Union."³ In 1907 a group of locals throughout the country withdrew from the International Boot and Shoe Workers, affiliated with the A. F. of L., and later formed the United Shoe Workers of America,⁴ which has since merged with the Shoe Workers' Protective Union. The instances described are typical, and such conditions will be found at the bottom of ideologic and opportunistic dual unionism in this country.

³ Whitney, *Jurisdiction in American Building-Trades Unions*, p. 67.

⁴ Galster, *The Labour Movement in the Shoe Industry*, chap. viii.

VII. BASIC CAUSES OF DUAL UNIONISM

A DESCRIPTION of the conditions responsible for dual unions throws some light on its causes. At the same time it also leaves concealed many of the subtler and undersurface factors. There is no doubt that the mere founding of separate unions, either locally or on a national scale, when unionism was in its infancy is responsible for most of the dual unionism. Then there was an open field. Later when each organisation developed a personality with its own leaders and attachment of the members the problem of amalgamation became more difficult. Unless a self-sacrificing and intelligent leadership was present, or economic pressure threatened annihilation of both organisations, the prospect of amalgamation or fusion was practically nil. Even so a very large number of organisations did fuse into powerful international unions.¹

The second great cause for dual unionism was the fact that in some instances the existing union claiming jurisdiction over a trade or industry unintentionally failed to function in certain branches or territories or deliberately refrained from exercising its jurisdiction. When overpowering social and economic forces induced the leaders of existing unions to content themselves with disregarding certain trade and industrial areas that came under their jurisdiction, the workers, chafing under abuses and impositions, resorted to unorganised strikes. In most of these cases the workers were unskilled or semi-skilled immigrants and those who gravitated to the top as local unpaid leaders were radically inclined. This combination generated considerable misunderstanding and bitterness.

¹ Glocker, "Amalgamation of Related Trades in American Unions", in Commons; *Trade Unionism and Labour Problems*, chap. xxvi; Whitney, *op. cit.*, chap. iii.

Some of the most effective dual unions are an outgrowth of such conditions. Thus the Amalgamated Textile Workers, Amalgamated Food Workers, Amalgamated Tobacco Workers, Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and the branches of the I. W. W. in the industrial centres are a result of unorganised spontaneous strikes and consequent independent union organisation.

a. Economic Conditions

The economic factors that were responsible for neglect of the immigrant workers centre around the time-worn struggle between the newcomer and those on the ground floor, a struggle which embodies the suspicion and hostility of those who have found a strategic entrenchment which they guard against all comers. This conflict has manifested itself in the attitude of many unions towards women, Negro and other workers less favourably situated, but who might threaten the privileged position. The immigrant worker was likewise regarded as an intruder who by injecting himself into the arena controlled by the union would cut in on the established standards.

A favourite but futile tactic of the early highly skilled unions was resort to prohibitive initiation fees in order to exclude immigrants and other newcomers to the trade. An apt illustration is the experience of immigrant painters and decorators. "During the period from 1905 to 1910 when the great wave of immigration swept this country thousands of unorganised workers flooded the American labour market. Among these immigrant workers there was quite a percentage of painters, most of whom came from Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia. Barred from the unions by excessively high initiation fees and at the same time being class-conscious enough to refuse to be the target of unscrupulous employers under open shop conditions, these workers began to organise into a union at first as the 'Alteration Painters' Union'. This title was adopted because the majority of these painters were employed on remodelling and repainting old buildings. The newly constructed buildings were under strict

control of the Building Trade Unions where dual unions not connected with the A. F. of L. had no chance to work. In the course of two years this young but militant organisation succeeded in unionising hundreds of painting shops to which the Brotherhood had paid no attention and after several successful strikes for the improvement of working conditions of its members it grew to be a dangerous rival to the Brotherhood. The 'Alteration Painters' subsequently became the 'International Painters' and Paper Hangers' Union', with several locals in New York, Brooklyn, Jersey City and Philadelphia. It was affiliated with the United Hebrew Trades and received most loyal support from the progressive organisations connected with that body. . . . In spite of the splendid progress made as an independent organisation it had always been the aim of the International Painters' Union and its parent body, the United Hebrew Trades, to merge this organisation with the Brotherhood for the ultimate benefits of both unions. . . . In 1914 the International Painters' Union was admitted into the Brotherhood, and from that time the Painters' Union in New York made incomparably great strides towards progress in the trade union field."²

b. Neglecting the Unskilled

An equally stimulating economic factor in the formation of dual unions by recent immigrants is the ignoring or subordinating of the interests of the unskilled and semi-skilled by the skilled. In many of the industries employing large numbers of immigrant workers the existing or A. F. of L. unions constitutionally assume jurisdiction over all the workers. In actual practice they have been largely motivated by the craft or skilled worker spirit. The United Textile Workers is an industrial union in form, but "its spirit and, for the most part, its methods, are those of the old craft unionism. . . .

² Philip Zausner, Secretary District Council No. 9, Brotherhood of Painters, Paperhangers and Decorators of America; "The History of the Painters' Union in New York City", *American Labour Year Book*, 1921-22, pp. 182-183.

Although it includes the unskilled to some extent, it has paid more attention to the skilled workers and has organised a larger proportion of them. . . ."³ Naturally the immigrants are and were in the past the great bulk of the unskilled and semi-skilled.⁴ This neglect of the unskilled and semi-skilled was also a factor in the formation of a dual union in the men's clothing industry. Although the United Garment Workers were "theoretically formed on an industrial basis. The craft spirit of the skilled workers was emphasised . . . and little attempt was made to bring in the less skilled workers."⁵

Another example of the slowness of a union to adapt itself to the changed conditions in manufacturing processes is found in the cigar industry. "When the union was first organised, handwork was the prevailing system in the industry, though moulds were just beginning to be used. Since then the use of the machines has increased steadily, resulting in the use of cheap unskilled labour, a large proportion of which is that of women."⁶ This development has reached the stage where the bulk of cigars are produced in large factories using machinery and employing chiefly "recent" immigrant workers. The union membership was confined largely to workers engaged in the manufacture of hand-made cigars in small shops, employing a few workers. Indeed, the workers in the large cigar factories where machinery was used were by various means discouraged from joining the union.

³ Savage, *Industrial Unionism*, p. 250; Budish and Soule, *New Unionism*, p. 256; *Immigration Commission Reports*, vol. 72, pts. 3-4, pp. 121-126; Leiserson, *Adjusting Immigrant and Industry*, p. 201.

⁴ This is not the present policy of the United Textile Workers. Within the past few years it has equally concerned itself with the interests of the unskilled and semi-skilled, as well as the immigrant workers, but see Newdick, "New Textile Leadership", and Palmer, "Amalgamated Textile Leadership", in *American Labour Monthly*, July, 1923.

⁵ Savage, *Industrial Unionism*, p. 207; *Clothing Workers of Chicago*, p. 74; Leiserson, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

⁶ Savage, *op. cit.*, p. 291; Bradley Buell, "Structural Changes in the Cigar Making Union in New York City", chap. i, in mss.; *History of Labour in the United States*, vol. ii, pp. 69-74.

There seemed no alternative but to organise independently, or, into a dual union. The Cigar Makers' International Union has rather belatedly acknowledged the error of this exclusion policy. At its 1923 convention "all restrictive laws that were formerly in the constitution have been removed. Under the present laws all wage earners in the cigar and tobacco industry, regardless of how employed, are eligible to membership. The bunch breaker, the roller, those employed on bunch-breaking machines and the automatic machine, team workers, hand workers, mould workers, in fact all wage earners, regardless of how employed in or about the cigar factory, are eligible for membership. . . ." ⁷ This was a convention of stock-taking and of most frank confession of past mistakes such as are chiefly responsible for so many "decaying" or retrogressive unions in the American labour movement. President George W. Perkins, in his address to the Twenty-fourth Convention, laid bare the errors that led this union into the slough of despond:

"The real cause of the present condition of the union is restrictive laws in our Constitution, which in themselves drove men and especially women into the great non-union shops and were a potential force in helping to build them up into large going concerns. These restrictions of all kinds, including the use of the union label, should be removed. . . . They will have to be before we can be entirely successful. . . . No power on earth can stop the at least gradual introduction and use of improved machinery and progressive methods of production. Any effort in that direction will react against those who attempt it. Our own condition proves that our efforts at restriction were futile and ineffective and injurious. Without an exception any organisation since the beginning of the factory system that has attempted to restrict the use of improved machinery and improved methods of production has met with defeat." ⁸

⁷ *Cigar Makers' Journal*, May 15, 1924, "Organisation", pp.

3-4.

⁸ *Cigar Makers' Official Journal*, August, 1923, pp. 2-13; see also December 15, 1923, "Ratification", p. 2; "Push Forward", p. 4; January, 1924, "The Real Issue", pp. 7-8; February, 1924, "Democracy Ruled", p. 2; "Correspondence", p. 6.

c. Union Label Closed Unions

Not only has the disregard of the unskilled and immigrant workers by the old timers been a factor in dual unionism, but the monopolisation of the benefits from the union label by a limited group of workers has been a vitally contributing cause. Students of trade unionism have completely overlooked the significance of the label as a factor in keeping the bulk of workers in many trades and industries unorganised, and thereby stimulating dual unionism. Since the writer began doing field work it has become evident to him that in many industries where dual or independent unions have functioned, the union affiliated with the A. F. of L. has relied chiefly on the label as a means of maintaining a membership and working conditions. Upon further study and investigation, he has become convinced that this was more than a coincidence. Indeed in interviews many high union officials intimated that it was not advisable to organise too many workers since there is a limited demand for label goods. If the supply of such goods far exceeded the demand the label would lose its value to manufacturers. Consequently the unions deliberately limited the number of factories that would be unionised. To be sure such conscious scheming was the exception. In most cases neither the leaders nor the members consciously thought the situation through in this manner, but the effect was the same. They discovered that it was comparatively simple to convince certain employers that it would be to their advantage to permit the unionisation of their workers in order to be permitted to exploit a ready market through the union label. This is the easiest method of unionisation. It simplifies the problem of organising the workers. Instead of eating up union funds and the energies of union officials and members in extensive organising campaigns and strikes which may not prove successful, all effort is concentrated on convincing the employer that he stands to profit by using the label. In return he must establish

a union shop by requiring the workers in his plant to join the union. From the point of view of the officials and members of the union, this procedure has many advantages. The employer is now dependent upon the union label for his market; hence there is less prospect of his falling prey to open-shop propaganda, or otherwise risking a rupture with the union. Not needing to carry on organising campaigns and not fearing surprise assaults, the union devotes its funds to advertising and boosting the label. This course is pursued not only by individual unions but jointly by the internationals that feature the label through the Union Label Department of the A. F. of L.⁹

The advantages that accrue from the label generally appeal to employers conducting small or medium size shops. Employers of this class operate with limited capital and usually lack funds with which to develop markets. Likewise they generally have no widely advertised trade name or trade brands upon which to rely for steady and permanent patronage. The union label supplies such manufacturers a market, which the trade mark and extensive advertising supplies to the manufacturer having large capital at his command and the machinery for advertising and distributing his products. The advantages of this arrangement are illustrated by the fact that employers manufacturing union label clothing have organised themselves into the Union Garment Employers' Association, and co-operate with the United Garment Workers' Union in boosting the union label. In the tobacco and paper manufacturing industries two medium size manufacturers have virtually made the union label their trade mark and boost their goods at all union gatherings. On the other hand, employers selling services and commodities of a cost or character not demanded by workers, are not interested in the label and ordinarily

⁹ "American Federation of Labour", *History, Encyclopedia Reference Book*, 1919; "Union Label Department", pp. 433-434.

will not use it, even though entitled to it. Such firms usually have their own trade names and advertise extensively. There are, however, a few instances where large manufacturers with nationally known brands also use the union label.

This is particularly true in the shoe industry where several of the best known manufacturers still brand the union stamp in the shoes manufactured by them and sold in their retail stores. It is significant, however, that the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union takes pains to warn in its union label advertisements that "named shoes are frequently made in non-union factories."

Thus, the permanent and stable membership of a considerable number of unions and of practically all unions relying chiefly upon the label is confined to the small shops of the trade or industry. The bakers, butcher workmen, barbers, hotel and restaurant workers, retail clerks, and many other unions consist of workers employed chiefly in the small neighbourhood shops or stores, where the union card or label is in demand. In other words, they are employed in establishments catering to the patronage of union members and their families, as well as to sympathisers. The Retail Clerks' Union has an inconsequential membership in large department stores and no recognition at all. Only a small proportion of the members of the Barbers' Union comes from the so-called exclusive shops. The hotel and restaurant workers have, in a few instances, secured recognition in the well-known hotels and "high-grade" restaurants, and "down-town" chain restaurants and lunch rooms. From time to time, more energetic and adventuresome national and local officials launch an organising campaign in the other areas. Unfortunately, these ventures are seldom attended by success and gradually the union members and leaders come to content themselves with the shops already under their control and which are held by the union label.

A similar situation exists in the factory trades proper. The United Garment Workers' Union functions largely

in plants manufacturing the cheaper grades of men's suits and overalls, and shirts; whereas the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have union recognition in plants of the large firms with national brands, that rely on advertising, and among other manufacturers who could not capitalise the union label to their advantage or have not been reached by the United Garment Workers. Again the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union,¹⁰ the A. F. of L. Union in the shoe industry, draws its membership chiefly from workers employed in the manufacture of men's shoes. The demand for the union label shoe seems to emanate chiefly from union men and sympathisers. The various dual unions, on the other hand, are more strongly entrenched in factories and centres producing women's and children's shoes, and elsewhere where the label is not a factor.

Another organisation whose membership is confined mostly to the small shops relying upon the label for marketing their products is the International Cigar Makers' Union. Dual unionism, on the other hand, operates among the workers employed in the larger shops manufacturing cigars not having the union label. The experience of this union indicates the extent to which the membership at large is in accord with the leaders in limiting the benefits of the label to a specific group of workers. For years it was debated in this union whether workers employed in the large shops, where mechanical devices are used in the manufacture of cigars, should be admitted to membership. Those already in the union seem to fear that if the latter class of cigar makers was admitted, they too would very likely wish the use of the label for their shops. This dilution of the label would undoubtedly have cut in on those who worked in the smaller shops, where cigars are still manufactured by hand and mould. Consequently, in a referendum vote, the proposition of admitting the factory workers to full

¹⁰ Galster, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-115.

membership was overwhelmingly rejected. Instead, an alternate plan was endorsed, whereby these workers would be admitted only to partial membership, and would not be entitled to the use of the label.¹¹ This is one of the clearest instances where a union exploited the good will of the labour movement for the benefit of a very limited number of workers in the industry at the expense of the great bulk. In this case the workers were discouraged from organising by being denied equal standing when they applied for it on their own initiative. At its last convention, the Cigar Makers' Union revised its constitution so that all cigar makers, no matter by what process they produce cigars, are members on an equal basis. That is, all disabilities limiting the rights of certain classes of workers were repealed. While considerable credit for this action is due to the courage and vision of the leaders, it is quite possible that recognition of imminent annihilation brought about this change in attitude and frank acknowledgment that the various restrictions were detrimental to the future welfare of the organisation. With the advent of prohibition, the marketing conditions of the union cigar were revolutionised. Previous thereto the cigars bearing the union label were disposed of largely in saloons frequented by workers. In this market the union label was indispensable. A saloon-keeper, catering to patronage of wage earners, could not ignore the official and unofficial demand that he handle label cigars. Likewise, the patrons watched each other, so that the entire atmosphere provided a market for the goods. With the outlawing of the saloon, the situation changed. This concentrated union label market has been diffused into channels where union sentiment and tradition are not so overpowering as to exercise compulsion in the observance of union customs. It is not so feasible to enforce the sale of union label cigars in cigar stores, whether chain or independent, or in drug and candy stores—all of which are generally patronised by mixed groups. Thus the

¹¹ *The Cigar Makers' Official Journal* for 1919 and 1920.

abolition of the saloon reduced the demand for union label cigars, which decline automatically affected the union membership. In all probability, this situation of threatened annihilation forced the change in policy whereby the union was thrown open to all cigar workers on an equal basis.

That dual unions have not developed in all trades or industries where existing unions have confined most of their energies to maintaining an organisation in those branches which can market their commodities through the label is purely an accident. A case in point is the men's hat industry, coming under the jurisdiction of the United Hatters of North America. Their membership is mostly in factories using the union label, and yet no dual union activities have manifested themselves in that industry. On the other hand, the label need not be a destroyer of militancy nor a force inducing parasitism and decay. The printing trades' unions are an outstanding example of unions that have profited greatly from the label, but have not neglected that portion of the industry that cannot be organised through offering the employer the advantage of a ready market.

d. Linguistic Differences and Misunderstandings

The cultural and particularly the linguistic differences that resulted from the varied immigration, especially of south and east Europeans, or so-called "recent" immigration, tended to accentuate and aggravate situations so that these immigrants remained mainly unorganised. In many industries they were the backbone of dual unions. The membership of the existing unions consisted of Americans or north European English-speaking workers. These latter workers had an industrial and urban background. The "recent" immigrant workers, on the other hand, had suddenly been transplanted from a primitive agricultural environment and a peasant status, totally ignorant of urban and industrial customs. Their odd dress, "foreign" mannerisms, inability to understand English, and slow

comprehension of the prevailing attitudes and practices presented a well-nigh unbridgable gap. The union leaders were, with some notable exceptions, baffled by this new problem. Not knowing how to deal with the new arrivals they feared to organise them. The reaction of the English-speaking members only complicated matters. Theirs was an attitude of contempt, mingled with ridicule and often outright hostility. It was a case of lack of understanding, resulting in distrust, hostility and contempt, because of linguistic and other cultural differences. This misunderstanding and hostility between different cultural groups is, of course, not peculiarly characteristic of the labour movement, nor of the differences between the recent immigrants and American or old immigrant stock. Quite often it has been featured in order to conceal economic motives. It has a natural enough basis where the immigrant was feared as a competitor. Social and political differences gave an ethical veil to the economic motives. And it was used not only against recent immigrants. Thus a high official in the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paper Hangers told the writer a few years ago that in Boston Irish painters were still discriminated against and were denied admittance by that local which was controlled by old American stock of Anglo-Saxon descent. The ban was being gradually removed by the insistence of the International Union.

Notwithstanding the social difficulties, however, many unions bravely undertook to organise the immigrant workers. A few, as the United Mine Workers, were astoundingly successful, largely because they studied their approach to the immigrant workers (Leiserson, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-191). And these unions have not been faced with dual unions backed by immigrant workers. Up to recently, however, even the well-intentioned unions lacked the necessary understanding of how to approach these immigrant groups. This shortcoming is aptly illustrated by the experience of the United Garment Workers. When the writer interviewed their officials they bitterly com-

plained, and with documentary evidence to support their contention, that they had been unfairly accused by the Jewish press of using Irish Catholics to organise the Jewish workers. These officials protested that they had actually used Jews as organisers, and that a majority of the members of their Executive Board were Jews. But when these Jews were interviewed it developed that they were German Jews with an entirely different background from that of the Russian and other recent Jewish immigrants. So wide a gap was there between these two Jewish groups that there was more in common between the south European, non-English-speaking Italian of peasant stock and the recent immigrant Jews similarly circumstanced as helpless foreigners, than between the Russian and other recent immigrant Jews and the German Jew with an American background.¹²

Nor were the positive obstacles keeping the immigrant from being unionised always attributed to the attitude of the American workers. Where the immigrant group had articulate leadership it not infrequently served to keep them from joining the existing unions. In many instances leaders of the various immigrant groups placed obstacles in the way of organising their fellow countrymen. The helpless and uninformed immigrants were totally dependent upon the more articulate and better adapted, who in turn exploited them to further their economic, political and social interests and ambitions. These immigrant leaders naturally found it profitable to keep their fellow countrymen wholly dependent. The organisation of the helpless newcomers into unions would introduce another agency to which they could turn for guidance and protection, thereby minimising the undivided hold of their erstwhile leaders. It was, therefore, to the interest of the latter to prevent and discourage unionisation of their fellow countrymen.¹³

¹² This circumstance is a very conclusive instance of the fact that the difference between the American and immigrant workers was not racial but cultural.

¹³ Saposs, "The Mind of Immigrant Communities", part iv, in *Public Opinion and the Steel Strike*.

The misunderstanding was often more boldly crystallised if an immigrant group had leaders and active spirits definitely converted to an ideology that differed from the one subscribed to by the leaders of the existing unions. Some of the leaders and rank and file immigrants either had come in contact with or were active in the radical labour movements of Europe. An outstanding example is the case of the Russian and East European Jews. Many of their intellectuals and others were active in the socialist and other radical labour movements.² Where they and their fellow countrymen were members in large numbers of existing unions, they chafed under the action of their union officials in supporting "capitalist" parties. Yet when they attempted to propagate their principles they were told that politics must be kept out of the union. Not infrequently the union officials openly scorned radical doctrines, and thus intensified the resentment of the assertive radical immigrants.

Those immigrants who came here with little or no knowledge of social philosophies quite often came under the influence of socialist and of I. W. W. propaganda. These elements generally showed more interest in the immigrants than did the unions that claimed jurisdiction over them. Consequently immigrant workers in many industrial centres manifested a distinct partiality for radical doctrines. In many industries these immigrants threw in their lot with the I. W. W., or, as in the case of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, joined in forming an independent or dual union.

This inclination of the immigrant toward radical doctrines made leaders of the existing unions chary of accepting them as members. This reluctance in turn gave the radical dual unionists a free field among the immigrant workers. The course of events within the so-called regular unions only tended to make their leaders more averse to the organising of immigrant workers. Simultaneously with the immigrant workers' manifest sympathy for radicalism and with the outcropping of radical dual unions

with a predominantly immigrant membership, a wave of radicalism, supported mainly by the old German and new needle trades unions swept the labour movement and challenged conservative control of most A. F. of L. unions. Thus we find at this time (1907 to 1917) a formidable delegation of socialists at A. F. of L. conventions representing such powerful unions as the United Mine Workers, International Typographical Union, International Cigar Makers, and so on. They fought ably for socialist principles and generally mustered over a third of the votes. Outside of A. F. of L. conventions their power and influence was evident in the defeat of old and conservative leaders of national and international unions. In 1911 the conservative officials of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union were replaced by avowed socialists. About this time the radicals came into control of the International Journeymen Tailors' Union. The chief executive officer, John B. Lennon, who was also Treasurer and a member of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., was defeated by a socialist. Likewise, the International Association of Machinists was swept into the socialist fold. In this upheaval James O'Connell, president of the Machinists and Executive Council member of the A. F. of L., went down to defeat. Indeed the effective opposition in most unions was led by radicals, even though the dissatisfied members did not subscribe to their beliefs. This radical ferment within their own ranks transformed even the casual interest in organising the immigrants who were presumably radicals into outright reluctance. From formal interviews and incidental conversations during this period it was evident that the conservative labour leaders felt determined that the A. F. of L. must not permit itself to become swamped by immigrants. Organising the unorganised immigrants so widely impregnated with radicalism or so readily susceptible to it would be merely enlisting followers for a cause which the old officials abominated and considered the very antithesis of their ideals and aspirations, and

would strengthen their dangerous and able rivals who were aiming to replace them.

As a result of this combination of circumstances, and as a mask for the underlying causes, the excuse was presented that the immigrants were unorganisable, or else were unmanageable when organised, difficulties attributed largely to their cupidity, ignorance and inability to understand English. And there was sufficient truth in the charges to make them plausibly universal. Immigrants were occasionally used as strike breakers; frequently they discontinued their union membership following a strike; often they were unresponsive to union appeals. But these actions were not attributable to innate characteristics. They were induced rather by ignorance of industrial life and by unfamiliarity with union traditions and practices. Practically invariably where an intelligent approach was undertaken in organising immigrant workers they proved devoted and staunch unionists. At any rate when neglected by the regular unions they accepted the leadership of dual unions whenever it was offered, thus showing that they were organisable.

e. Secessionist Dual Unions

In analysing the causes for dual unions, examples have been taken primarily from trades and industries where unorganised workers were organised into independent or separate unions. A considerable proportion of the dual unions, however, were an outgrowth of seceding local unions and members, as well as of local unions and members that were expelled from the A. F. of L. or regular unions. The causes that brought about this category of secessionist dual unions do not differ materially from those that laid the ground for the other types. Usually an element, feeling aggrieved and failing to secure satisfactory redress, will conclude to secede. The electrical workers were split in twain "because one section, mainly the outside electrical workers, seceded from the national organisation. The outside workmen get less pay

than do the inside electricians, and because this difference persisted and seemed very marked, the outside men came to believe that the union, dominated by the inside workmen, was merely 'using' them to improve conditions."¹⁴ Similarly, considerable disagreement over policies in the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union divided it into two factions. After years of dispute at conventions and election contests, the losing faction concluded "that it was hopeless to try to change the policy of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union." A part of the opposition group seceded from the organisation and eventually formed the United Shoe Workers of America.¹⁵ In the case of the electrical workers the breach was healed and the two factions reunited, but in the shoe industry the division still continues.

Secessionist dual unions are frequently a development of discipline for violation of union rules or agreements. It is not uncommon for internationals to expel locals when they fail to abide by a duly subscribed to written trade agreement. Such locals may decide to continue independently. Likewise, occasionally membership expulsions resorted to as a disciplinary measure result in secessionist dual unions. An instance of secession because the international exercised its expulsive power is presented in the case of the Machinists:

"The Amalgamated Metal Workers of America . . . was formed by a radical group which seceded from the International Association of Machinists. In November, 1919, the New York district of the I. A. of M. elected officials belonging to this group. In a very short time, however, the Grand Lodge took steps to eliminate them from the organisation by bringing certain charges against them, and succeeded in expelling them on the ground that they had misused union funds by paying strike benefits to men who did not belong to

¹⁴ Whitney, *Jurisdiction in American Building Trades Unions*, pp. 80-85.

¹⁵ Galster, *The Labour Movement in the Shoe Industry*, chap. vii; *Lest We Forget*, pamphlet issued by the U. S. W. of A.; *Proceedings of the Eighth Convention*, Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, 1907.

the union. The action on the part of the Grand Lodge was interpreted by a large proportion of the membership in the New York district as a direct attack upon the progressive element, and as a result about fifty per cent of the New York members withdrew from the I. A. of M. in March and formed a new organisation. . . . The expelled officers had not favoured a split in the first place, but the progress of events made it seem inevitable" (Savage, *Industrial Unionism in America*, pp. 284-285).

f. Inadequate Holding Power

Secessionist and other dual unions are evidence that certain international unions do not possess sufficient holding power over their subordinate units. Where local or sectional groups are self-sufficient they are wont to be independent of the international union. In such cases unless the latter can exercise tangible economic power it may find itself constantly confronted with secessionist undertakings. Unless voluntary organisations have a positive holding power it is difficult to avoid defections from time to time. The immediate reason for separation may be significant or trivial. Some have given the reason that it is a waste of money to send per capita payments away from home when the funds can be accumulated and controlled locally. Then again mere incompatibility between local and international leaders may induce a break. It may be purely a desire for domination and personal ascendancy or just stubbornness on the part of one official. Disagreement over minor policies and tactics may also serve the purpose. In these cases there is no pressure to be conciliatory and no urgent necessity to give and take on the part of the contending parties.

The lack of holding power may be attributed to various factors. Generally in these unions the journal is poorly edited; the national officials and organisers may be of doubtful ability; the control of funds is in the jurisdiction of the local or sectional groups; and the power of the organisation decentralised. In other words, the national union is of little direct service to its members, acting more as an advisory body and a clearing house. Their interest

in the international being purely of a business nature the membership has little intangible attachment and loyalty to it. Not having been imbued with an abstract loyalty to the labour movement or even to their own organisation, and lacking the dramatic and capable leaders that make themselves either practically or emotionally indispensable, the membership and the local labour leaders feel no attachment or loyalty to the international. Under such circumstances factions are bound to secede from time to time.

Where international unions do not possess the intangible holding qualities, they can dominate only through economic pressure. The enduring and most effective economic power of an international consists in the need for controlling national markets, which may be markets either for labour itself or for the products.

Thus with highly developed national communication, workers rove about and are often encouraged by employers to change residence and jobs. In order to control this national labour competition during normal as well as strike periods, national affiliation is highly desirable. In highly skilled trades this is absolutely necessary for the assurance of uniform apprenticeship regulations, and protection against the introduction of hurriedly and poorly trained workers. An additional urge in such cases is the desire of locals to maintain for their members free access to other local labour markets. Unless they were affiliated with the international, their members would be discriminated against in their wanderings (Whitney, *op. cit.*, p. 94).

In trades and industries where the commodity manufactured is sold in national competitive markets, affiliation with the international is essential. Employers in one locality are at a disadvantage unless their competitors pay the same union rates and are otherwise subjected to uniform working conditions and requirements.¹⁶ Employers often are as insistent on national affiliation in such in-

¹⁶ Ethelbert Stewart, "Equalising Competitive Conditions", in Commons, *Trade Unionism and Labour Problems*, chap. xxxiv.

stances as is the union itself. In general, employers are apt to favour the international because it has their confidence and they look to it to exercise wholesome disciplinary control over the local members and leaders.¹⁷ There are instances, however, where it served the interests and fancy of employers to encourage dual and secession unions.¹⁸ Employers and their associations are interested either in assuring continuous production by maintaining a strong union where they deal with it, or by totally eradicating the union. In either case they will favour the union that will answer the purpose.

Superimposed on these two fundamental economic factors (national labour and national commodity competition) are various incidental economic holding forces. These other agencies which enable the international to hold its subordinate units in check are national control of strike funds and national benefit features. The union label is another. Since the A. F. of L. will recognise only labels of international unions, locals desiring to profit from the label must retain affiliation with the national body at all cost.¹⁹ Likewise employers using the label to advantage will favour the international as against the subordinate units. Another case is that of unions relying on political influence and power in promoting the interests of their membership. Such organisations find it expedient to retain national affiliation in the regularly constituted movement. This is particularly true of city, state, federal and public utility employees.²⁰

Where these tangible or intangible holding powers do not exist there is a greater tendency towards dual unionism. This applies particularly to miscellaneous trades such as teamsters, bakers, barbers, hotel and restaurant work-

¹⁷ Kopald, *Rebellion in Labour Unions*, chap. vii.

¹⁸ Whitney, *Jurisdiction in American Building Trades Unions*, pp. 65-94; Haas, *Shop Collective Bargaining*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁹ Spedden, *The Trade Union Label*, chap. iii.

²⁰ Janes, "Tendencies in Trade Union Development", in Commons, *Trade Unionism and Labour Problems* (2nd Series), chap. xxv; Spero, *Labour Movement in a Government Industry*, chap. xiv.

ers, musicians and so on. Thus the doctrine of "The Dominance of the National Union in American Labour Organisation"²¹ needs qualification. In certain trades and industries the unions lack either the leadership or the economic and emotional forces necessary to make the international union dominant and thereby forestall dual unionism.

In common with ideologic dual unions, the motive of control and domination underlies the origin of opportunist dual unionism, but they differ from the former in that consideration of the broader ideologic concepts are a minor and even a negligible factor, if thought of at all. However, not infrequently ideologic and practical consideration are intermingled in bringing about dual unionism. Even the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, a leading socialist dual union, stressed the opportunist or immediate grievances, although the more alert of the membership and leaders were considerably perturbed over the anti-socialist attitude of the United Garment Workers' officials. Likewise the leaders of the existing unions were influenced by ideologic considerations as well as by the practical problem of maintaining cohesive unions when they hesitated in organising the immigrant workers. Their consternation at this horde of newcomers tinged with radicalism, and their fear that the deluge might swamp or dislodge them from control, manifest the desire to conserve certain philosophic concepts, as well as the desire to retain control for its own sake. The difference in ideas, to be sure, is correlated with immediate practical policies and tactics and the protection of personal fortunes. Self-interest was the dominating motivating force. Where the confusion arises as between opportunism and ideology is in the fact that occasionally the outstanding insurgent leaders or the intelligent membership have been radicals, which circumstance conveyed the impression that the separation arose over fundamental ideologic differences.

²¹ Barnett, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. xxvii, pp. 455-481; reprinted in Commons, *Trade Unionism and Labour Problems* (2nd Series), chap. xxvii.

VIII. THE FORTUNES OF DUAL UNIONISM

SOME dual unions have been eminently successful, others are eking out as favourable an existence as their rivals, and still others have proved a miserable failure. A search for conditions of success or failure must begin with membership, which is the prerequisite of organisation. Wherever a secessionist dual union at the outset took with it a substantial and homogeneous membership it generally had little difficulty in perpetuating an effective organisation, provided it had intelligent leadership. The same is true of dual unions that come into existence and gain a considerable compact membership either through spontaneous strikes of unorganised or by an alliance of scattered independent locals. But beyond the variable human factor either of leadership or membership, without which organisation is not possible at all, there are certain inanimate conditions, which, if present, virtually assure stability and permanency for dual unionism. Thus, all the successful dual unions function in a definitely prescribed area or branch of the trade or industry not touched by the rival union, so that decisive conflict but seldom arises, and then on the No Man's Land of unorganised or poorly organised territory. On the fringe, where organisation is poor and the field open, sniping and guerilla warfare occur regularly, and not infrequently develops into open battle.

An outstanding example of such warfare is presented in a recent strike in the men's clothing industry in Chicago. Although "all other concerns renewed their agreement for another period of three years", two of the firms "insisted upon a reduction in wages and certain changes in working conditions that would further reduce wages thereby creating a situation which made it impossible for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers to accept." A strike resulted,

and the rival union, the United Garment Workers, undertook to fill the places of the men and women on strike. Moreover, this union permitted the struck firms to advertise "in the daily newspapers, using the name of the United Garment Workers and the American Federation of Labour, in an effort to induce men and women to take the place of those on strike."¹ Other unions have also carried on open warfare against their rivals when they found them in a vulnerable position.

But such instances are exceptional. That a tacit division of the field is the usual occurrence is evident, since records indicate only casual bitter and destructive conflict, except where separation occurs through secession. The area or shops controlled by the rival organisation is rarely invaded. Indeed, without proclaiming it publicly, or perhaps acknowledging it to themselves, the activities of the rival unions indicate that they accept a division of the field and are reasonably confident that the truce will not be violated by undue encroachment. In his various field investigations and contacts with organised labour, the writer has unearthed cases where such understandings have been definitely arrived at between the original and dual unions. These are, however, the exceptions. Usually there is no verbal or written agreement. It merely happens that one union gravitates into control of some area or branch of the trade and industry and becomes so firmly entrenched that the other realises that it is foolhardy to wage battle in that territory. Thus a mutual feeling of recognition of the sovereignty of certain areas grows up, although not openly acknowledged. Consequently the dual union develops a personality and a leadership and membership loyalty which makes it inevitable that it should persist as an independent entity. At the same time the fires of hatred towards the rival are constantly fanned, thereby emotionalising the separation and making it more

¹ Report of Executive Board to the Meeting of the Chicago Federation of Labour, *The Federation News*, July 18, 1925. See also *The Advance*, July 17, 1925, p. 2.

difficult for either organisation to approach the members of its rival.

Instances of this tacit division of the field are so numerous that space will permit of citing only a few in order to illustrate the point. Such a situation exists in the textile industry. One union confines its membership to cotton mill workers; another to woollen and silk mills of the north; a third is more active in the south and in Canada. Then within the New England textile district each operates in localities where the others do not. Rarely do these unions come into conflict although they operate in adjoining territories. This industry is so large and extensive and so poorly organised that there is little occasion for the numerous unions to tread on each others' toes.² In the railroad industry the same practice prevails. To take but one instance, the American Federation of Railroad Workers cuts into the jurisdiction of all the unions affiliated with the Railway Employees Department of the A. F. of L. It is a militant dual union in that it proclaims its aim to supplant all these unions. At present it controls the shop and track workers employed by a few roads, as the Philadelphia & Reading and Pittsburgh & Lake Erie. Although there is constant friction between this organisation and the A. F. of L. unions, they do not launch campaigns against each other in their strongholds.

In those trades and industries where the union label is a factor, its use by manufacturers has served as a criterion for this tacit division of the field between the regular and dual unions. Thus in the shoe industry the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union counts the bulk of its membership among those employed by manufacturers producing men's shoes and marketing them through the label. Its outstanding rivals are largely active in the branches of the industry manufacturing women's, children's and other shoes not dependent on the label. It seems quite different machinery is used for the manufac-

² At present the textile unions are conducting unity negotiations with a view to either closer co-operation or amalgamation.

ture of each class of shoes, so that in most cases factories and even shoe centres specialise in manufacturing either men's, women's or children's shoes. In the case of cigar manufacture it is the small shop where cigars are manufactured by hand and mould, and which uses the label that furnishes the bulk of the membership to the International Cigar Makers' Union. The workers in large or so-called "trust" shops are either unorganised or are members of the Amalgamated Tobacco Workers. The men's clothing industry presents a like situation. The United Garment Workers is chiefly active in the overall and shirt and clothing factories, producing work clothes that must bear the union label in order to be sold. On the other hand the Amalgamated Clothing Workers operates in that part of the industry which manufactures advertised brands and other clothing that does not rely upon the label for a market. To conclude this array of evidence with but one more illustration: The A. F. of L. Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union is strongest in that portion of the trade where the union card and union button can be capitalised, whereas the dual union operates in the exclusive restaurants and dining rooms, as well as in the chain restaurants and quick lunch rooms patronised by miscellaneous people in the commercial centres, with whom union sentiment and tradition is a negligible quantity.

An instance of outright understanding between the rival unions is presented in the case of the organised teamsters of Chicago. There they are divided into two district councils. The one affiliated with the A. F. of L. union has control over milk, laundry, taxi chauffeurs and other vehicle drivers. On the other hand, the independent district council controls hay and grain, ice and coal drivers and so on. In the outlying suburbs there seems to be a geographic division. One of the district councils will control the drivers in certain suburbs, whereas the other will have them in others. On the whole the relationship between the two organisations is rather amicable in that they will not scab on each other or take advantage of a

crisis to advance their fortunes at the expense of the rival. At intervals an ambitious business agent or other leader will transgress on the territory of his rival. This encroachment may precipitate a pitched battle of varied ferocity, but neither side has permitted it to reach the point of extermination. Consequently neither side is seriously weakened and generally the dispute terminates with another truce of long duration.

Hence dual unions not only enjoy a continuous existence but thrive when the dual union secures control of a comparatively clear-cut division of the trade or industry that does not too drastically overlap or encroach upon the jurisdiction of the other union or unions. Where they do attempt to conquer each other's territory, results are apt to be disastrous to both, especially if the employer wishes to exterminate unionism entirely, in which case he merely plays them against each other. This rarely happens or if it does it is not carried on very long, as the rival unions realise the danger. Consequently we have these tacit divisions of the field. The ultimate principle that makes for success of a dual union is that it operates in another part of the trade or industry and does not come into destructive conflict with its rival. The unions do not overlap appreciably and cannot be played against each other by the employer. Therefore in actual practice the labour movement suffers little from dual unionism in the sense of competing rival unions, constantly at each other's throats. Indeed, dual unionism should really be termed *separatism*, for it represents for the most part independent unions operating separately and in separate plants or branches of the trade and industry. This is also largely true of the dual unions in Europe.

a. Failures of Ideologic Dual Unions

Even where ideologic dual unions have been as favourably situated as the opportunist dual unions they have nevertheless generally proved a failure. This fact has given rise to the opinion that this type, largely because

of its radicalism, has certain inherent weaknesses. The staying power of ideologic dual unionism in other countries in contrast to its ephemeral qualities in the United States suggests in part the reasons for its failure here. Ideologic dual unions in other countries have attained stability and function as effectively as those which they aim to outrival. Likewise certain radical unions are eminently successful. The failure of radical dual unionism in this country is chiefly attributable to the fact that it came under control of revolutionary radicalism, which often entrusts responsibility to individuals lacking practical understanding, and which generally sponsors a conception of labour strategy that forestalls the development and perpetuation of substantial mass labour organisations. One characteristic leader and active member type is so constituted mentally as to fail to comprehend the practical problems involved in controlling or governing mass organisations. As credulous and zealous idealists those coming under this classification have such naïvely unbounded confidence in the holding power of their ideals that the need for devising effective disciplinary machinery or resorting to the usual invisible manipulations in order to hold the organisation intact does not even occur to them. Consequently, the organisation, no matter how promising, either naturally disintegrates or passes under the control of more calculating, and possibly designing and self-seeking, persons.

The naïvely idealistic type is, of course, persistent and self-sacrificing. In so far as it is practical it very much resembles the advance agent in theatrical promotion and in civic and commercial boosting projects. On the religious field it is akin to the evangelist type. It has unbounded energy and remarkable power to attract attention but no capacity to manage or direct the intricate affairs of a mass organisation. This temperamental type is, of course, not only active in the labour movement, but it seems that it has, because of its persistence and unselfish attitude, had more opportunities in the radical labour movement, par-

ticularly on the fringe where there is hard work and little material compensation. With the existence of extensive areas of unorganised workers, this type has had a wide field for activity and has organised many workers. But evidently because it lacks the capacity for managing and shuns detail or routine responsibilities, it is suspicious of any organisation that becomes institutionalised, and the unions founded either fall under control of more realistic individuals or disintegrate. Occasionally, and particularly in the radical unions, individuals of the sort described are tolerated or even "used" by the practical leaders.

The writer has met several radicals of this evangelistic type who, after organising quite substantial unions, voluntarily withdrew from responsible executive positions because of their temperamental make-up. Most of them do not sufficiently appreciate their limitations so as to know where to quit; so they either run the organisation into the ground or have to give way to more practically minded leaders as soon as the organisation shows promise of providing lucrative positions. Robert Michels, in his book, *Political Parties*, speaks of the radical as a prophylactic. It would seem that the ultra-idealistic radical serves the additional functions of evangelist and pioneer promoter in unorganised territories, as well as of drudge in maintaining weak and struggling unions.

Non-dual unions have, of course, undergone similar experiences. In many instances they were founded by evangelistic radicals. As long as the unions remain weak and offer little opportunity for the exercise of power or financial remuneration, the radicals continue undisturbed in their control, but about as soon as the organisation manifests promise the practical, hard-headed man rises to the surface. He may be a subscriber to radical or conservative ideology, or simply a careerist, but concerns himself chiefly with "bread and butter" problems and the fostering of a thoroughly disciplined mass organisation. Where persons possessing these qualities do not gravitate to the top the organisation withers or reverts to prop-

aganda methods. The same state of affairs also partially accounts for the failure of many boring from within attempts of the radicals.

The bulk, however, of revolutionary radical leaders of ideologic dual unionism have shown that they understand the "game" of manipulation and control and are past masters in its practice. The history of the Socialist Trade and Labour Alliance and the Industrial Workers of the World presents conclusive proof that this type guided the destinies of radical, ideologic, dual unionism. Their weakness lay in their scorn of policies and tactics that make for stable mass organisations. It was their peculiar conception of labour strategy, evidently an outgrowth of the crusader spirit and philosophy, that led them to assume this attitude. They stressed the importance of propaganda that prepared the workers for the future revolution, to the exclusion of practices for improvement of present-day living conditions. Hence, while they know how to manage the organisation so that it does not get out of their hands, and, if occasion requires, can even dispose of dangerous rivals; nevertheless, because they discount union practices that make for stability, as collective bargaining, trade agreements, strike funds, payment of officials, benefit features and so on, the organisations they control lack the necessary adhesive factors for holding the masses. To the crusader type and philosophy, the union is primarily a medium for propagandising their particular panacea. The furtherance of the immediate interests of the membership is regarded only as an incidental function of the union. Consequently they centre their energies on making converts to the cause, rather than on building up an economic organisation on trade union lines. The mass of workers, appreciating mostly tangible results and evidences of union activity, and manifesting a permanent interest largely in organisations with properly devised disciplinary machinery, lose interest and gradually become completely detached. Then only the "militants" or disciples remain, and the organisation ceases to be a trade union, having

become metamorphosed into a sect of the faithful, that is, a propaganda body. This was the evolution of the Socialist Trade and Labour Alliance and the I. W. W. The I. W. W., having had the most spectacular career, is the most striking. During the spontaneous strikes that it led its membership would swell tremendously with immigrant and unskilled workers. These workers yearned to be marshalled into unions, as the experience of the United Mine Workers and needle trades unions testifies. But the I. W. W. did nothing, and the membership dwindled so that in a short period after termination of a strike the local would find itself with only the active workers who were interested in spreading I. W. W. doctrines.

Contrast with these blunders the practices of the opportunist or practical union leader and the reasons for failure of ideologic dual unionism become understandable. The "practical" type also understands the fine art of manipulation, but whether honest or corrupt, radical or conservative, is chiefly interested in exercising power, rather than disseminating ideals. Being practical minded, it intuitively senses that no union can be effective without a substantial membership. This is most easily procured and maintained by ministering to the daily needs of the workers through the maintenance of mutually advantageous business relations with employers. The coupling of tangible benefits with coercive disciplinary machinery, like the closed shop, and so on, makes it comparatively simple to hold the confidence of the membership. It is virtually needless then to develop the membership emotionally or intellectually in order to hold them through their attachment to abstract ideals.³ The commonplace method is, of course, more easily accomplished than the educating or converting of inert masses to abstract ideologies could be.

Had ideologic dual unionism not gotten into the hands

³ The opportunist radical unions are supporting educational work for this latter purpose. But even in these organisations the leaders are more interested in mass education, which means emotional rather than intellectual development.

of revolutionary radicals who put propaganda and preparation of the working class for the final revolution above practical achievements, it is highly probable that it might have become as firmly established as in other countries. That radicals can build stable unions is proved by the success of European labour movements controlled by opportunist radicals. The needle trades unions are an outstanding example in the United States. In so far, however, as these unions are successful they have either balanced the immediate and ultimate objectives, or have shifted emphasis from ultimate aims and propaganda methods to immediate demands and business methods. In their case the purely evangelical and crusader leader type either exercised little influence from the outset, or was soon superseded by the realistic hard-headed variety, concerned with the daily business problems of the organisation. These radical dual unions are, in such respects, similar to the stable conservative dual unions of other countries.

In this country, radical dual unionism, largely because of its monopolisation by revolutionary radicals, became confined to evangelical and propagandist functions. An analysis of the policies and tactics of the I. W. W. in succeeding chapters will specifically illustrate the practices of revolutionary radicals that account for the failure of ideologic dual unions led by them.

IX. I. W. W. ORGANISING METHODS

THE activities and experiences of the Industrial Workers of the World, as the outstanding radical union, furnish an explanation for the failure of this type of unionism to obtain a substantial and permanent industrial membership. A study of its accomplishments reveals the fact that it made little headway among the organised workers. On the other hand it had for a time phenomenal success in enlisting the unorganised under its banner. The enthusiastic response of the recent immigrant workers was particularly striking.

Indeed, the peak of the I. W. W. success came in the period of its greatest influence among this type of workers. They were the dominant participants in the great and spectacular strikes which made the I. W. W. famous. Notable among such strikes were Lawrence, Paterson, McKees Rocks, and Mesaba Iron Range. At present the I. W. W. has no significant following either in the great industrial centres, or among the recent immigrant workers. Through an intensive field study the writer sought to unearth the causes for its early successes and later failures in these industrial centres and among this class of immigrant workers. The results of this field study led him to broaden his inquiry in order to determine why the I. W. W. failed to maintain a permanent hold among any but migratory workers. This supplemental search consisted chiefly of intermittent field studies and direct contacts with labour leaders and trade union members. In this manner practically every important industrial centre east of the Rockies was visited and studied. Wherever possible this field study was supplemented by documentary sources.

a. Failure to Capture Existing Unions

From the outset it became evident that, in common with native workers, immigrants in successful unions were gen-

erally unresponsive to I. W. W. appeals. The most obvious example is the United Mine Workers of America with over 80 per cent. recent immigrant membership. Indeed, the history of this union reveals the fact that the coal industry has been more highly and successfully organised since the advent of the recent immigrant than at any other period. With the possible exception of the building industry it is the best organised industry. And the many attempts of the Industrial Workers of the World, through its ablest organisers, to win over the immigrant workers from this union have proved barren.

Another instance is presented in the case of the phenomenally successful Jewish needle trades unions. During the height of its achievements, the I. W. W. made no appreciable dent in their membership. In its earlier history, when it "stood for constructive revolutionary industrial unionism", that is, when it was still under socialist domination, the I. W. W. succeeded in cutting into the membership of the United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers. "An ugly quarrel resulted, which was not terminated until 1907", with the I. W. W. as the loser.¹

Indeed, there is not on record a significant instance in which the I. W. W. succeeded in winning over established unions, whether affiliated with the American Federation of Labour or Independent, or in weaning away a considerable membership from such unions. Even the radical Jewish workers, who are also recent immigrants, did not fall prey to the I. W. W. charm. The reason in their case, as in the others, is quite obvious. By the time the I. W. W. came on the scene the Jewish workers, particularly in the needle trades, had already formed stable and successful unions on their own initiative. (It is of more than passing interest to note that this is the only recent immigrant group that founded its own international unions and otherwise developed a distinct labour movement with its press, polit-

¹ Budish and Soule, *The New Unionism*, p. 78. Several I. W. W. locals also functioned for a short period in the ladies' garment trades. See Levine, *The Women's Garment Workers*, chap. xviii.

ical clubs, benefit societies, and other auxiliary agencies.) Having their own unions, they saw little attraction in the I. W. W. Besides, ideologically the unions and their members were under socialist influence and the break between the Socialist Party and the I. W. W. naturally prejudiced the needle trade leaders and through them the membership against the I. W. W.² Similarly the United Mine Workers was an eminently successful organisation and its radically inclined membership and leaders were adherents of socialism. During the height of I. W. W. success and its agitation among the coal miners, the vice-president of the United Mine Workers was Frank Hayes, a prominent socialist. Likewise some of its most prominent leaders, as Duncan McDonald, John Walker and Adolph Germer, were influential socialists. The United Mine Workers as well as the needle trades unions are also organised on industrial lines. The I. W. W., even during its spectacular activity, likewise failed in its attempt to win over unions that had withdrawn from the American Federation of Labour. Thus, the International Association of Car Workers left the Federation in 1911 and has since continued an independent union, now operating under the name of American Federation of Railroad Workers. Again the Carriage and Wagon Workers' International Union severed its affiliation with the American Federation of Labour in 1918 and has since functioned as an independent union, known as the United Automobile, Aircraft, and Vehicle Workers of America. Both these unions are industrial in form and socialist in spirit. While the leaders when interviewed gave no definite reasons for ignoring the overtures of the I. W. W., their general reply indicated that they were not in sympathy with its policies and tactics. It would seem that they sensed the shortcomings of this revolutionary rival of the Federation.

² Leiserson, *The Jewish Labour Movement*; Budish and Soule, *The New Unionism*, chap. iv; Burgin, *Yiddishe Arbeiter Bewegung*, pp. 593-601; Saposs, "The Rôle of the Immigrant in the Labour Movement"; *Amalgamated Illustrated Almanac*, 1924, p. 150.

Thus, the I. W. W. attempts to win over existing unions proved futile. "Going" unions with a record of stability and experience were not attracted by it. At best it merely carried on guerilla warfare against them. Occasionally it would capture a local or larger unit, but never a large enough group to disrupt or effectively discommode the national organisation. On the other hand, it lost the two substantial organisations that originally joined in forming it, and contributed mostly to its strength. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, consisting of British immigrant workers, withdrew before the first year of I. W. W. existence was completed, and the Western Federation of Miners, composed chiefly of native workers, abandoned it in 1907 (Brissenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-119, 122, 324-326).

This failure to capture the machinery of existing unions also made it practically impossible to reach most of the members. It seems that unions interesting themselves in the immediate betterment of the living conditions of their members and at the same time devising effective disciplinary methods have little difficulty in withstanding onslaughts of a rival organisation which subscribes to a programme that even more approximately approaches the ideology and emotional proclivities of the members than does that of the union it seeks to replace. The more important ways of holding the membership are the gaining of tangible results in better wages, shorter hours and other working conditions, as well as insurance and benefit features. The more important disciplinary methods that make it possible for unions to hold their members are the check-off, and conspicuous display of union buttons, or the subtler closed shop and preferential union shop methods. The mass of workers are apparently chiefly interested in immediate gains and are generally ideologically inarticulate and inert. Radical and conservative labour leaders agree that the rank and file has little preference for any of the ideologies, particularly in the early stages of acquaintance with the labour movement. It is their

opinion that the masses are impulsive, a disposition which is generally confused with radicalism. The average worker is prone to follow those in whom he has confidence. He is governed by personal relations. He will attach himself to some "active spirit" or "militant",—a fellow worker with initiative and assertiveness, who manifests at least a superficial knowledge of the social questions. It is to such that the average workers in their bewilderment turn for guidance and interpretation of the routine, as well as of the more far-reaching and perplexing problems. These local leaders who work on the job are the key to the situation, especially in unorganised and poorly organised territories. The organisation with which they throw in their lot will receive the support and adherence of the great mass of workers. Where a powerful union is developed their influence diminishes since the organisation becomes the symbol of leadership. Local leaders who do not fit in with the programme of the national organisation can readily be discredited and their influence otherwise crippled. The thoughtless masses are then held by symbols and disciplinary machinery, and by the fear of losing tangible benefits, so that they become alert only during moments of great crisis. In this manner existing unions generally hold the allegiance of the great mass of members as well as of the local leaders. This circumstance largely explains why the membership of existing unions was totally indifferent to the appeals of the I. W. W., whose task involved not only winning the key men but also cutting across the ironclad barriers of loyalty, discipline and general dependence upon the union. It is generally acknowledged that the immigrant workers have a stronger predilection than native workers for radical philosophies and even demand their endorsement by the conservative unions in which they hold membership. If, however, the union is otherwise successful, they seldom abandon it for not endorsing their demands. In short, once an organisation becomes firmly established "on the ground floor", it can hold its membership against all comers practically in-

definitely even though the ideology and temperament of the leaders differ from those of the membership.

In the instances where substantial groups of workers were led to abandon existing unions their leaders generally possessed sufficient experience and ability to organise independent unions rather than to turn to the I. W. W. for leadership. Consequently, although the immigrant workers in the men's clothing industry were distrustful of the attitude of the United Garment Workers and indulged in several spontaneous strikes, they nevertheless did not turn to the I. W. W. but proceeded to organise themselves first locally and then nationally. The leading spirits were Jewishly flanked by Italians. The Jewish labour movement was well under way at this time. In New York, where these workers were most assertive, they benefited from the tutelage of the United Hebrew Trades, and the Jewish intellectuals, who, as socialists and anarchists, were keenly interested in encouraging organisation among the workers.³ These elements provided the necessary leadership. In addition, the leaders and active members among the Jewish workers already possessed an articulate ideology in socialism. Hence the men's clothing workers organised an independent union instead of following the leadership of the I. W. W.

Another instance is found in the United Shoe Workers. (This union has now been absorbed by the Shoe Workers' Protective Union.) A number of locals in various parts of the country withdrew from the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union during 1907 and 1909, and formed themselves into the United Shoe Workers of America. Largely because of their experience and leadership, they managed to do this without outside help. Some of the prominent leaders of this group were also socialists.⁴

³ Budish and Soule, *New Unionism*, pp. 78, 85-95; *Clothing Workers of Chicago*, chap. iv; Haas: *Shop Collective Bargaining*, chaps. i and iii.

⁴ *A Review of a Few Important Events in the Development of a Labour Union in the Shoe Industry* (Pamphlet issued by the United Shoe Workers of America); *Proceedings of the Eighth Convention of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union*, 1907.

In both these cases the so-called "seceding" elements merely perpetuated their local unions and erected new superstructures or national independent unions under the leadership of those who had led them in their fights in the old unions.

b. Profiting from Failures of Existing Unions

Whether it was the failure to win over existing unions or mere chance that caused the I. W. W. to become chiefly interested in the unorganised is uncertain. Possibly this development was due to the fact that the "anarcho-syndicalists" came into the ascendancy at this time (Brisenden, *op. cit.*, Part III). Regardless of what the cause may have been, it is common knowledge that the organisation made its greatest headway among the unorganised. Of these, the immigrants in the so-called large scale or trustified plants were the most responsive. The most spectacular successes centred in areas where the local leaders and workers, particularly immigrants, had, on the basis of casual experience during a disastrous strike, lost confidence in the existing unions and their officials. The I. W. W. also had fair success in industrial centres where unions had not operated during the advent of the immigrant workers. The general course of affairs is aptly illustrated by events in the territories where the organisation was most active. Previous to I. W. W. participation in the famous textile strikes the United Textile Workers, an American Federation of Labour organisation, was active in the very centres with which the I. W. W. name is connected, as Lawrence, Paterson, Passaic. But the union neither succeeded in firmly establishing itself nor in retaining the confidence of the immigrant workers, although they at first were loyal to it. Thereafter the workers in these textile towns remained practically unorganised until the great strikes led by the I. W. W. Small unions of some of the skilled American workers were the only exceptions (*Ibid.*).

Occurrences on the Mesaba Iron Range illustrate the

processes through which existing unions lost the confidence of the workers, as well as the haphazard course pursued by the I. W. W. in following up their failures. In 1907 while the Western Federation of Miners was conducting an organisation campaign a premature and unauthorised strike was forced by the membership. It seems that discrimination against union men and other "terrorist" practices of the Oliver Mining Company, a subsidiary of the United States Steel Corporation, goaded the workers into throwing up their jobs without waiting for official sanction. From such evidence as it was possible to gather by a visit to this section ten years later, it appears that the Western Federation of Miners did all in its power to win the strike. But the Americans, who were the skilled workers, such as shovel men, engineers and crane operators, although members of the American Federation of Labour unions of their crafts, refused to join the immigrant workers. The strike resulted in disastrous defeat, with the Western Federation bearing the blame.⁵

The transition in allegiance from the existing unions to the I. W. W. is an interesting illustration of the influence of local leaders and "active spirits" or "militants" during such critical periods. Although not in the majority, the Finns were the most assertive, supplying the immediate leadership. During the 1907 strike they took charge of meetings, court cases, relief and so on. As they were socialists, the local strike headquarters in the Range mining towns were maintained in the Finnish socialist halls. The other immigrant groups unquestioningly accepted their leadership. The Finns were doubly sympathetic with the Western Federation of Miners because it was an industrial union with a socialist philosophy. The failure of the strike, however, which they were inclined to charge to the Western Federation leaders, led them to

⁵ *Western Federation of Miners, Sixteenth Annual Convention*, 1910, pp. 13, 256-257, 263; *Immigration Commission Report*, vol. 16, part 18, pp. 330, 336-337.

become lukewarm towards that organisation. Since they were the leaders, the other nationalities accepted their attitude.

Thenceforth a chain of events drew the Finns into the I. W. W. fold. The breach between them and the Western Federation was further widened when in 1912 it expunged endorsement of socialism from its preamble and affiliated with the American Federation of Labour. Simultaneously the Socialist Party adopted its condemnation of sabotage and recalled Haywood from the National Executive Committee. Many of the Finnish socialist branches were expelled for refusing to abide by the decision. Among them were the locals on the Mesaba Iron Range. In the meantime the immigrant miners on the Range once more became restless. The Western Federation attempted to capitalise the unrest by launching another organising campaign. But the Finns, who were still the dominant immigrant group, were suspicious and unresponsive. Sensing a strike, the foremost leader of the Finnish group wrote to Haywood, urging him to take advantage of the situation by supplying experienced organisers so as to build up an organisation that would cope with the impending crisis. Haywood did not even reply. Finally, in the Spring of 1914, without prompting or unified leadership, the eruption occurred quite spontaneously and simultaneously in several of the mining camps.⁶ As the news spread throughout the Range local strikes followed in its wake, culminating in a general strike. The Finns naturally assumed leadership again. Mass meetings were called in the various camps, at which delegates were chosen to proceed to Virginia, Minnesota, for a Range-wide conference. Here the need for experienced and capable leadership from the outside was discussed, and the conference unanimously voted to invite the I. W. W. to lead the strike.

This action was but natural. Following the collapse of the 1907 strike the Western Federation had withdrawn

⁶ "Mesaba Range Minnesota Strike", *American Labour Year Book*, 1917-18, p. 72.

from the field, and the situation had been thrown into the hands of the Finns. Since the I. W. W. catered to them, they in turn encouraged its overtures. It carried on continuous written and spoken propaganda on the Range among the different immigrant groups in their native languages. The more alert of the immigrant workers, with some initiative, understanding and qualities of leadership, were familiar with its spectacular activities. Finally the Finns threw in their lot with the I. W. W. at a time when the Western Federation of Miners and the American Federation of Labour were in disrepute and were making little effort to counteract I. W. W. accusation against them. The meagre direct knowledge the immigrant workers possessed with reference to these organisations was linked with the bitter failure of the 1907 strike. The scornfulness of the skilled American workers in refusing to make common cause with them against a "common enemy", and the impression that the Western Federation had failed to render adequate financial and other aid were constantly dramatised and featured so that these factors became proverbial. This situation was supplemented and perpetuated by the current I. W. W. literature and propaganda meetings picturing the American Federation of Labour as the enemy of the workers and the ally of the capitalists. Under the circumstances it was not surprising that the Virginia conference voted to entrust the conduct of the strike to the I. W. W. This decision could hardly have been made if the Western Federation of Miners had, with the co-operation of the American Federation of Labour, maintained, following the collapse of the 1907 strike, a skeleton organisation whereby it could have counteracted I. W. W. propaganda. Had the Western Federation succeeded in winning the 1907 strike and then maintained a powerful organisation, it is hardly probable that the I. W. W. would have displaced it, even though the former had repudiated socialism.

In so far as it was possible to piece together occurrences so as to reconstruct the situation in other centres of

I. W. W. activity where existing unions had failed, somewhat similar events led the immigrant workers to throw in their lot with this revolutionary organisation.

In industrial centres where immigrant and unorganised workers had no previous contact with labour organisations, the I. W. W. played a similar rôle. The 1909 McKees Rocks strike against the Pressed Steel Car Company is an instance of this type. Smarting under numerous abuses the workers quit work although they had no semblance of organisation. Leadership was needed as the local leaders did not feel equal to the task. The only organisation offering to supply it was the I. W. W., and without formal action the local leaders placed themselves under its tutelage. It seems that a number of the men had had contact in Europe with labour organisations that subscribed to socialist doctrines and were therefore familiar with revolutionary thought. "Many of the Hungarians took part in the great railway strike of Hungary. Three men were in the 'Bloody Sunday' carnage in St. Petersburg. Participants in the Switzerland railroad strikes were there and several Italians who took part in the great resistance strike of Italy. Also there were many Germans with cards from the 'Metallarbeiter Verband' of Germany, Austria, Denmark and Sweden. Besides there were many members of the socialist parties of Europe, and others who were members of the Socialist Party of America. The I. W. W. brought these men together. Militant men who were able to speak the different languages carried the message and the men were eager to accept it." ⁷

Thus, contrary to popular opinion, the I. W. W. did not organise the unorganised but merely supplied leadership where spontaneous strikes occurred. It made its greatest headway in industrial centres where existing unions had failed or were not functioning effectively, if at all. It really did no systematic and concerted organising in the sense of conducting methodical and painstaking organis-

⁷ Louis Duche, "Victory at McKees Rocks", *The International Socialist Review*, October, 1919, pp. 289-300.

ing campaigns. It seldom massed its organisers for this purpose. They confined their energies chiefly to spreading propaganda and "spotting" locals or propaganda centres. This procedure naturally advertised the I. W. W. among the unorganised and immigrant workers, even though they understood little of its aims and ideals. Consequently, when conditions forced a spontaneous or unorganised strike, it was the only organisation with which they were familiar and in which their immediate leaders had sufficient confidence. Under the circumstances it was natural for them to accept its proffers of leadership.

From the standpoint of trade union action the chief accomplishments of the I. W. W. consisted in the providing of expert strike leadership to unorganised workers, and in the raising of funds for relief and litigation. Successful or unsuccessful termination of a strike would find the I. W. W. leaders and organisers withdrawing to other "class war" battlefields (free speech fights or strikes) or the agitational trail. In unorganised industries where spontaneous strikes did not occur they confined themselves to their usual propaganda and agitational activities. The two outstanding instances are the packing and the steel industries, in both of which recent immigrants predominate. During the height of the I. W. W.'s career no spontaneous strikes occurred in either the packing or the steel industry proper and the organisation, consequently, never passed out of its routine propaganda stage in these industries.

X. I. W. W. FAILURE TO OBTAIN STABILITY

ONE of the baffling problems presented in this study was the invariable failure of the I. W. W. to maintain permanent organisations with substantial membership even in those centres where it led successful strikes. Study applied to its methods revealed the fact that whether consciously or not it was largely interested in furthering its revolutionary propaganda in industrial centres under the guise of trade union action. Its scorn of political action and its belief that the aspirations of the revolutionary workers could be attained by economic organisation and action led it to develop a technique that became especially adapted to sporadic and haphazard organising activities and unorganised strike leadership. Aiming primarily at spreading its revolutionary doctrines, and having no faith in politics, it turned to strikes and other forms of direct mass action as media for its propaganda activities. Strikes were the most feasible method in large industrial centres; whereas in the West free speech fights were resorted to for similar ends, and there was little interest in permanent organisation. Revolutionary interest would not, however, have been sufficient to attract immigrant and other unskilled industrial workers. But it was the daring and magnetic leadership and the admirably effective propaganda methods that brought the I. W. W. into contact with these workers, thereby enabling it to capitalise their restlessness and their spontaneous strikes, which it used as a vehicle for more intensive and far-reaching agitation. In attracting the unorganised its evangelical propaganda methods and general irresponsibility placed it at an advantage over existing unions encumbered with trade agreements, treasuries, and the necessity of proceeding with discretion and decorum. The I. W. W. could be as sensational and reckless as it saw fit. It was not con-

fronted with the problem of explaining intricate practices such as collective bargaining and trade agreements. It could make the wildest demands and accusations against employers since it paid slight heed to public sentiment and did not expect to negotiate directly with the employers. This unrestraint enabled it to impress more greatly as well as to stir more deeply the passions and emotions of the credulous and embittered immigrant workers. This lack of responsibility gave its magnetic and silver-tongued orators a wider latitude in appealing to the untutored and undisciplined foreigners.

In its efforts to reach immigrants through both written and oral propaganda the I. W. W. particularly excelled. It developed and supported organisers from among the important immigrant groups. Propaganda nuclei were organised among practically every immigrant nationality. Literature was printed in various languages—Finnish, Italian, Russian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Polish, Lithuanian, Croatian, Bohemian, and even Chinese.¹ Through these media the organisation “advertised” itself as the friend of the “oppressed” workers, and maintained contact with the more alert, assertive, and influential workers of the different immigrant elements. In this manner it not only developed a “militant minority”, but also succeeded in moulding the thought of large numbers of immigrant workers. With its foreign language pamphlets, books, press, and magnetic speakers, who invariably approached the immigrant workers sympathetically, it made tremendous inroads among them.

In contrast, the foreign language literature issued by American Federation of Labour and independent unions, was, with few exceptions, of inferior quality and negligible quantity. Nor did these organisations generally evince so sympathetic an attitude as did the I. W. W.² Most internationals that publish foreign language literature gen-

¹ Park, *The Immigrant Press and Its Control*, chap. ix; Brissenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-160, 395-399.

² See “Say it in English”, in *American Federationist*, May, 1924, p. 407.

erally content themselves with merely reprinting their "dry" constitutions. A few run foreign language sections in their journals. As these are usually translations of articles that appeared in English in the previous issue they lose most of their potential value. The immigrant membership having already indirectly learned the contents, finds this form of literature stale and it is seldom read. Besides, the immigrant members resent being thus slighted. Another shortcoming of the foreign literature issued by these unions is that it is either composed or translated by professional writers who have no other connection with the union or with the immigrant workers for whose benefit the reading matter is printed. Such literature could hardly be so effective as that circulated by the I. W. W., written by fellow-countrymen of the immigrants who, in addition to knowing their background and characteristics, are intimately acquainted with their daily life and as members are in full sympathy with the aims and ideals of the organisation.

The different socialist groups and the socialist needle trade unions follow methods like those of the I. W. W., and have had equal success. When, however, unorganised immigrant workers, influenced by radical working class theories, sought leadership in strikes they had no alternative, even though they adhered to socialist doctrines, but to turn to the I. W. W., since it was the one organisation with which they were acquainted that offered leadership during unorganised strikes. A few instances have, indeed, been located of unorganised strikes led by socialists in centres coming under their influence. The most notable is the 1908 spontaneous strike of railway carmen at the Milwaukee shops of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad Company. These special efforts of radicals to reach immigrant workers raise the question whether the greater responsiveness of immigrants to radicalism is solely traceable to their cultural background and shattered hopes, or to the fact that as unskilled and unorganised, largely ignored by existing unions, they have come under

the uncontested influence of radicals who specialise in catering to them.

a. Repudiation of I. W. W. Policies and Tactics

Because the I. W. W. was primarily interested in propaganda its meteoric rise was followed by a like decline. In a short period it was overtaken by the fate the unions it sought to replace had previously experienced. It, too, lost the confidence of the immigrant workers in the industrial centres. The causes for decline in its case are, however, different, for most of the strikes led by it were successful, whereas it profited by the strike failures of existing unions. Its weakness consisted not in failure to win strikes but in neglecting to build up permanent unions. Such was the invariable indictment by local leaders. Bitter experience, together with familiarity with union achievements elsewhere, directed their attention to these practical phases. This observation, in turn, led to a critical analysis and contrast of I. W. W. proficiencies and deficiencies. The sympathetic and helpful attitude of its leaders during a crisis or a strike was acknowledged and praised. They were also credited with manifesting an uncanny understanding of the problems of conducting unorganised strikes. Old line union leaders in such circumstances were wont to be suspicious, and unduly critical, generally counselling that the strike be immediately terminated and that a period be devoted to first building up an organisation. This delay the local leaders felt was psychologically impossible since the masses would not understand such tactics. Once a strike is embarked upon it must be fought out irrespective of the probable outcome. Historically, the immigrant leaders are correct. Most unions trace their origin to spontaneous and unorganised strikes. It is also true that unorganised and particularly immigrant and unskilled workers must develop enthusiasm, solidarity and understanding through mass action and the strike before they can be interested in becoming permanent, dues-paying members. Calling off a spontaneous strike abruptly would be disastrous since the rank and file would not comprehend

such a procedure. In cases where established unions rendered assistance their approach was rather lukewarm and reserved. This moderation created the impression that they were not deeply interested. The I. W. W., on the other hand, plunged into the fray with youthful enthusiasm, and the immediate outcome was generally favourable.

It was the tactics and policies of the I. W. W. during normal times that distracted and disappointed these local immigrant leaders and native workers. They criticised the I. W. W. for not taking advantage of the enthusiasm generated during strikes to organise the workers into permanent unions. Specifically they indicted it on the following counts:

1. Outside of strike periods it only indirectly concerned itself with the furtherance of the immediate material interests of its adherents.
2. Even during strikes many of its leaders regarded the immediate issues as secondary and were mostly interested in propagating their doctrines.
3. It failed to establish local organisations that would function continuously in guarding the economic interests of the striking workers.
4. By withdrawing the prominent leaders upon cessation of a strike, and diverting their energies to propaganda pursuits during normal times or to the conduct of affairs in other storm centres, it deprived the local leaders of the counsel and guidance necessary in order to perpetuate and maintain the mushroom strike organisation, so that they generally found themselves unequal to the task.
5. The I. W. W. policy of denouncing accumulation of funds for the financing of strikes and of routine activities, and its policy of discouraging retention of paid officials to conduct the business of the local organisation served as an additional and insurmountable handicap.
6. Since with the automatic disbanding of the local strike organisation and its reversion to propaganda activities, no organisation remained to guard the interests of the workers and to aid them in maintaining the conditions

wrested from the employers, these concessions were gradually nibbled away by shrewd manipulations of foremen and superintendents, for whose skilful higgling neither the shop committees nor the individual workers were a match.

7. When changed conditions became unbearable and brought about a new crisis needing concerted action, the organising work had to be repeated. This emergency necessitated the improvising of a new strike organisation, begging for funds and so on.

8. Many of the local leaders also feared that, since the I. W. W. had become an outlaw organisation during the war, and had fallen into disrepute as being a revolutionary body, to engage again in strikes under its leadership, would be "playing" into the hands of the employers and of hostile public authorities.

Thus the local immigrant leaders and their more alert followers gradually began to feel the necessity of subordinating revolutionary ideals to immediate needs. "Deliverance" now became "ultimate deliverance", and wages, hours and other working conditions assumed a more prominent rôle in their scheme of things.

These conclusions of the local leaders in centres of I. W. W. influence were not arrived at wholly independently. Some of the eastern leaders had also begun to recognise the weaknesses of the organisation.

The prestige and accomplishments of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers were an equally inciting factor. It was not affiliated with the American Federation of Labour, but combined business stability with industrial unionism and a belief in the overthrow of the capitalist order. Practically all those interviewed referred to this union, eagerly inquiring as to its composition, activities and ideals. They were chiefly concerned as to whether it had lost much of its revolutionary spirit in the course of acquiring stability. And when these elements finally repudiated the I. W. W. they generally patterned after the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

It is also significant that these defections from the I. W. W. materialised before boring from within became the tactic of the left wing radicals. As has been previously described, a few, under Foster's leadership, forsook the I. W. W. as early as in 1911 in order to promote the capture of the A. F. of L. Foster's group exercised little influence among the radical immigrants. Its activities were largely confined to the English-speaking radicals. The prevailing ideal on the radical horizon was still dual unionism, only of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' variety rather than that of the I. W. W. The bulk of the radical element was not interested in the propaganda of capturing the American Federation of Labour unions. Their chief objective was the building of independent organisations that would manifest greater concern in the less sensational but more pressing problems of making a living. They were discouraged with the I. W. W., which over-emphasised fulfilment of ideals in the distant future and was wholly scornful of immediate economic needs. In repudiating it they had two types of organisations to choose from. On the one hand was the comparatively successful "pure and simple" business unionism of the American Federation of Labour. But while they admired its business methods and stability they abhorred its conservatism and distrusted its leaders. Rank and file repugnance towards anything tainted by the American Federation of Labour was too strongly embedded to even make it feasible to consider organisation under A. F. of L. auspices, although many of the local leaders said they had seriously thought of this course. On the other hand, there was the highly successful Amalgamated Clothing Workers, composed chiefly of immigrant workers and led by immigrants. It had dared to defy the American Federation of Labour and yet it overshadowed its rival, the United Garment Workers, the Federation protégé. Notwithstanding the bitter opposition of the regularly constituted labour movement, it was among the first to secure the forty-four hour week for factory workers, and had

otherwise shown remarkable acumen in building up a powerful union and in bettering the conditions of its membership. While possessing the business stability of the American Federation of Labour unions it was an industrial union with a radical philosophy. Some of the local leaders interviewed were hesitant, fearing that the Amalgamated was not sufficiently revolutionary. Others were regretful that an organisation with a large treasury and business methods must of necessity become less revolutionary. However, there seemed to be a consensus of opinion that the immediate benefits to be gained far outweighed the loss in radicalism.

The work of the I. W. W. was unintentionally supplemented by the socialists who, although officially believers in boring from within and bitter assailants of the I. W. W., nevertheless fought the American Federation of Labour because of its belief in "pure and simple" unionism. Among the indiscriminating and uncritical the I. W. W. capitalised this attitude to good advantage.

It was well nigh impossible to ascertain the attitude of the rank and file. Those who were interviewed voiced the stereotyped sentiments of their leaders, or were generally inarticulate. From these interviews it was quite evident, however, that the mass of immigrant workers had become inculcated with the I. W. W. passionate distrust of the American Federation of Labour and possessed a religious reverence for revolutionary industrial unionism.

On all sides the local leaders felt that the rank and file would follow their advice provided they did not override the current prejudices by affiliating with the Federation or discarding the idea of revolutionary industrial unionism. Outside of these general sentiments, the rank and file had no concrete preferences as to policies and tactics. In their opinion the so-called "active spirits" or "militants" were the ones to be reckoned with. The workers of some initiative and superficial understanding of social and economic problems were evidently the key to the situation. They controlled and dominated the impressionistic, un-

alert, and totally inarticulate mass. The great mass of workers trusted them and would follow them provided, of course, they did not commit too great violence upon the few nebulous attitudes in the minds of the many. Since the active spirits were also beginning to appreciate the shortcomings of the I. W. W., it was inevitable that it should be repudiated in the industrial centres where the newer tendencies were at work.

In the face of such developments the leaders of the I. W. W., imbued with the "historic mission of the militant minority" notwithstanding the rank and file were not conversant with its philosophy, ignored the possibility of the so-called militants' becoming dissatisfied with its mode of procedure. By unqualifiedly assuming this fatalistic attitude they were riding for a disastrous fall. They failed to realise that nebulous ideals must be supplemented by practical accomplishments in order to hold permanently even the intelligent adherents who come in daily contact with the mass of workers. These active spirits play an anomalous rôle in the labour movement. Whereas in organisations featuring practical and business-like methods they voice the inarticulate demand of the masses for idealism, in idealistic organisations they reflect the feeling of the membership for material, or bread-and-butter achievements; and they performed this realistic function as regards the claims of the I. W. W. Thus while at first the I. W. W. gripped the imagination of the immigrant and other unorganised workers so that they regarded it as a Messiah come to deliver them from their economic servitude, as they became somewhat oriented and conversant with practical trade union achievements, they began to sense the defects in its policies and tactics.

b. Formation of Independent Unions

It is highly probable that the dissatisfaction with the I. W. W. would ordinarily have dissipated into indifference. This is what actually happened on the Mesaba Iron Range where as much scepticism and criticism of the

ineffectiveness of the I. W. W. was discovered as elsewhere. There the indefatigable Finns are still carrying on propaganda but the mass is inert. In other centres where restlessness led to strikes the dissatisfaction crystallised into outright repudiation of the I. W. W. and the formation of independent unions. This tendency of former immigrant adherents to repudiate the I. W. W. manifested itself previous to and during the field investigation conducted by the writer in 1918-1919. As a result two full-fledged organisations made their début in the field of labour as independent unions. The first consisted of hotel and restaurant workers of New York City. These workers, in the dining rooms and kitchens of hotels and exclusive restaurants resorted to spontaneous strikes in 1905, 1908 and 1912. These strikes were led by the I. W. W. The local leaders became dissatisfied with the manner in which the strikes were conducted and with the failure to build up a permanent organisation. This discontent set them thinking of forming an independent union. By 1916 a union showing signs of stability was launched, which in 1918 became known as the International Federation of Workers in the Hotel, Restaurant, Lunchroom, Club and Catering Industries. The feeling of self-sufficiency and the lack of confidence in the I. W. W. rose to such heights, that in the strike of the Spring of 1919, the leaders did not even dare avail themselves of the assistance of former prominent I. W. W. leaders who had aided in their previous strikes and who were in sympathy with the new independent union. This union, founded by former I. W. W.s and by socialists who supported the I. W. W. on the economic field, is an industrial union, pursuing business methods, but revolutionary in philosophy. Since 1920 it has been known as the International Workers in the Amalgamated Food Industries, having extended its jurisdiction to all workers "who are in any way connected with the handling and serving of food." Its leaders demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of practical trade union tactics. Instead of

holding off until grievances accumulate which would force a general strike with its complex problems, they deliberately concentrate on individual establishments where their prospects are best. By striking at strategic times they generally secure concessions at least, and are also gradually getting a foothold in the industry. Likewise although operating on decentralised lines, the union encourages the employment of paid officials and the accumulation of funds. It is, however, still opposed to trade agreements and was formally syndicalistic in philosophy. It is now one of the independent unions that are definitely communistic.³ Its present tactics are quite feasible and exceedingly adaptable to the highly competitive hotel and restaurant industry. It has met with no greater success than most A. F. of L. internationals into whose jurisdiction it has intruded. But it has a substantial and fairly steady dues-paying membership.

The textile industry witnessed the second union which was chiefly an outgrowth of the failure of the I. W. W. to function effectively on the economic field. When spontaneous strikes again broke out in Lawrence, Passaic and other textile centres in 1919, the overtures of the General Executive Board of the I. W. W. to provide leadership were declined. Instead, independent unions were formed to conduct the strikes. During this time plans were concocted, with the assistance of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, for a new national union. The organisation was launched in the Spring of 1919 and named the Amalgamated Textile Workers of America. Its preamble was copied from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. It believed in trade agreements and strike funds. Led by former I. W. W.s and socialists and operating in the industry where the I. W. W. has had its greatest success it has been severely attacked by it. This union has since

³ *New York Call*, May 21, 1919, "Restaurant Men Quit A. F. of L."; Savage, *Industrial Unionism in America*, pp. 287-288, 293-296, 303-304; *American Labour Year Book*, 1921-1922, "The International Workers in the Amalgamated Food Industries", pp. 189-190; Foster, Cannon and Browder, *Trade Unions in America*, p. 2.

disintegrated but some of its units are functioning independently.

It is significant that since the founding of these two new unions radical defectionist groups from existing unions that would ordinarily have turned to the I. W. W. have also formed independent unions. One of these is the Amalgamated Metal Workers of America, founded in 1919 "by a radical group which seceded from the International Association of Machinists." Another is the Amalgamated Tobacco Workers of America which came into existence in 1920. "It resulted from the merging of various groups, some of which had seceded from the Cigar Makers' International Union of the A. F. of L. and some of which had been independent" (Savage, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285, 289-290).

These organisations resemble those that repudiated the I. W. W. in that they are industrial in form and revolutionary in philosophy, but seek stability. Likewise they include the word "Amalgamated" in their names. Since the phenomenal success of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, it has become the fashion to use this word when radicals found or reorganise independent unions. The most recent case is the Amalgamated Shoe Workers, an attempt to bring together the independent unions in the shoe industry.⁴ The boring from within element has also appropriated the word as their symbol for structural, tactical and ideological union adaptations. It is no longer "industrial unionism" popularised by the socialists and I. W. W., but "Amalgamation" that the revolutionists demand. From the 'seventies through the 'nineties the word "Progressive" was in vogue as designating radicalism in union matters. Now it is being replaced by the words "Amalgamated" and "Amalgamation".

c. Repudiation by English-Speaking Workers

This repudiation of the I. W. W. because of its inherent weakness in not appreciating the need of economic stability

⁴ Michael T. Berry, "Situation in the Boot and Shoe Industry", *The Labour Herald*, March, 1924.

is not characteristic merely of its former immigrant followers. Native non-migratory workers have reacted similarly, as is illustrated in the case of the Philadelphia local of longshoremen composed largely of Negroes but led chiefly by whites. They had been unorganised until the I. W. W. appeared on the scene. Through organisation they secured "job control" (closed shop) of about half of the Philadelphia water front. In 1919 this body of longshoremen counted a membership of about 3,500. Conditions on the docks improved considerably, and through businesslike management a substantial treasury was accumulated. Except for the lack of signed agreements the organisation functioned on union lines. Verbal agreements were abided by, strike benefits were paid, the daily routine of the organisation was attended to by paid officers, who saw that individual grievances were adjusted and that the terms of the verbal agreements were fulfilled. But the local felt hampered by certain I. W. W. regulations. Members from any other branches had to be admitted without payment of the initiation fee, while non-members could join by paying the \$2.00 universal initiation fee. All I. W. W. branches were also limited to 30 cents monthly dues per member, part of which went to the national office. At the 1919 convention, when half a day was consumed in adjusting this grievance, the longshoremen's local contended that the low initiation fee and dues tended to draw an unnecessary number of workers to the section of the docks under their control, since it enjoyed better working conditions. They also felt that the newcomers should contribute their share for the benefits they were reaping because of the sacrifices of the old members. This result could be achieved by requiring that new members pay a fair initiation fee in recognition of the fact that they would not have enjoyed the good conditions had not the organisation been in existence. The members also had an eye for the future and felt that the power and influence of the union would be enhanced by strengthening its treasury. Besides, the membership could afford to

pay higher dues. With this end in view, they asked for an amendment making it optional for locals to raise the initiation fee to not more than \$5.00 and the monthly dues to not more than 50 cents. The doctrinaires and defenders of the faith fought this innovation. They took the position that raising more funds than were necessary for the barest current expenses was dangerous and contrary to I. W. W. principles—such a practice meant aping the A. F. of L. and “craft unions”; accumulation of funds would turn the I. W. W. into a business union and would minimise its revolutionary character. The convention discussed no other measure bearing on the economic functions and activities of the I. W. W. and its subsidiary units. The remainder of the two weeks was confined to routine business matters or the furthering of propaganda activities. The proposition of the Philadelphia longshoremen was overwhelmingly rejected (*Proceedings of the Eleventh Convention of the I. W. W.*, May, 1919, in Mimeograph). This group was not to be thwarted in its efforts to place its organisation on a business basis. Hence, at the 1921 convention they were suspended “for insisting on charging a \$25.00 initiation fee in violation of the constitution.” At this convention similar punishment was meted out to a New York local of Italian bakers who persisted in charging a \$15.00 initiation fee (Savage, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-166). This failure to accept the successful practices of unions is further illustrated in the outcome of the Atlantic Coast Marine Transport strike of the Fall of 1923. The writer has learned from reliable sources that the small shipowners were willing to come to terms, but the I. W. W. rejected their offer on the ground that it would settle either with all or none. Consequently the strike was completely lost. Union experience indicates that such procedure is fallacious and generally disastrous. In a competitive industry unions find it advantageous to play individual firms or groups against each other. This method usually results in first organising the weaker and smaller concerns, after which it is possible to accumulate

the sinews of war for camping on the trail of the larger and more prosperous employers. This strategy the I. W. W. has failed to recognise.

Thus, the only organisations in the industrial centres that attempted to function on the economic field in the usual manner pursued by unions were disowned. It is this action that brings to light the true character of the I. W. W. Unconsciously, all its tactics and policies were directed towards developing a propaganda organisation. This undoubtedly is the chief reason why the I. W. W. failed to secure a permanent foothold in the industrial centres of the East and Middle West. Had the I. W. W. interested itself as much in developing stable unions as it did in furthering propaganda it would in all probability have become a formidable rival of the A. F. of L. Certainly it would have become the permanent leader of the unskilled and semi-skilled immigrant and native workers of the large scale and trustified industries which are now practically unorganised. It has had leaders of extraordinary ability who could have developed stable economic organisations had they wished. As it is, these industries still remain largely unorganised.

d. Co-ordinating Evangelical and Business Methods

It was not the spectacular and daring methods of the I. W. W. in conducting propaganda and strikes that were faulty. Indeed it would seem that such methods are essential in organising masses of unorganised and inexperienced workers in so-called trustified industries. Emotional appeals and revivalistic tactics seem to be indispensable, as the conservative John Mitchell and the radical Wm. Z. Foster both testify. They also agree with the I. W. W. that large numbers of unorganised workers can be got to strike when only a small percentage have enrolled as union members. Their experience has further demonstrated that unorganised workers must first go through the baptism of a strike before they can be interested in becoming permanent, dues-paying union mem-

bers. The 1902 anthracite coal strike was called when only 8,000 out of the 125,000 miners had joined the union. It was as spectacular as any led by the I. W. W. The difference lay in the fact that the leaders did not flaunt the public nor the coal operators. They directed events so as to win the support of the one, and the confidence of the other in order to establish a permanent union. Then through substantial dues and cohesive local organisation they built a stable union with a strong treasury, paid officials, and well defined business methods (Mitchell, *Organised Labour*, pp. 355-396). These latter practises the I. W. W. scorned and thus brought about its own undoing. The successful Stock Yards organising campaign directed by John Fitzpatrick and Wm. Z. Foster was conducted on lines similar to those of the anthracite strike. This was also true of the organising campaign and strike of the steel workers. The final collapse of unionism in the packing and steel industries is attributable to the old-line union leaders to whose management these organisations were entrusted but who lacked the imagination and ability to direct such huge ventures. In this respect they resemble the I. W. W. Neither can successfully swing an undertaking to establish unionism permanently in the trustified portions of industry.

In this connection it is to be observed that the I. W. W. and some of the other radical unions have successfully capitalised the curiosity aroused during critical periods by developing a permanent intellectual and emotional interest in the affairs and ideals of the organisation. The former did this unwittingly by devoting its energies chiefly to propaganda. The latter do it through an ably edited press with separate papers for the different nationalities and with other forms of education. Through this ceaseless educational campaign many of the workers have been induced to take a deep interest in union affairs. A strike is not only an emotional, but also an intellectual ferment. Through properly conducted daily meetings and distribution of propaganda literature large numbers of work-

ers can be educated and converted to the cause of the union. By properly following up this awakening permanent interest is created. Most of the conservative unions have not taken full advantage of these opportunities. They seem to be content to perfect a closed shop and then rest on their oars instead of carrying on continuous education as a follow-up of strikes and other extraordinary events. Officially the United Mine Workers content themselves with such course. Unofficially many of its high officials, flanked by general socialist propaganda, accomplished for the United Mine Workers what the socialist needle trades unions did officially.

With the exception of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, these radical, independent unions have been no more successful than the A. F. of L. unions they aim to supersede. They too have only established themselves on the industrial fringe. Their membership is confined to the smaller units of the trades and industries in which they operate. It would seem that industrial form and radical philosophy even though coupled with business methods are not sufficient for the momentous task of organising large scale and trustified plants. Perhaps these radical, industrial unions, in common with most of the conservative Federation trade unions, lack the personal equation. Their leaders do not seem to possess the requisite genius and the constructive imagination for such a gigantic undertaking. They have shown no skill in using the emotional appeal, which is the spark that sets off the inert mass of unorganised and unskilled. Nor have they the necessary constructive and administrative knack of planning nation-wide organising campaigns or of building powerful and lasting industrial unions. However, the huge unorganised industrial areas are still a lure to the radicals. Some of the boring from within elements are already advocating abandonment of this principle, in so far as trustified industries are concerned. They despair of leaving this field to the A. F. of L. unions, feeling that the date of their capture is remote. They therefore ad-

vocate reverting to dual or independent unions in order to organise the unorganised. (See chapter xii.)

e. Success Among Migratory Workers

Largely by coincidence, the methods of the I. W. W. suit the tactical needs of the migratory workers. They constitute its backbone and keep it going. Talks with delegates of the three most active industrial unions—lumber, agricultural and construction workers—revealed the fact that lack of funds, of written agreements, of paid officials and of other necessary features of stability for successful unions among stationary workers, does not militate against the I. W. W. functioning as an economic organisation among migratory workers. Being “footloose” they shift from job to job and industry to industry. Under such conditions the most effective weapon is the short strike. It is not feasible for them to camp in the “jungles” for any length of time even if they had the funds to maintain themselves. If their demands are not granted within a few days there is no alternative but to “hoof” it to another place of employment. Nor is the “boss” a superior bargainer. Likewise the issues over wages, hours, other working and living conditions are not very complicated. Besides, these migratory workers shift industry and area with the change of seasons. Under such conditions strike funds, bargaining specialists or other paid officials, trade agreements, and so on, are superfluous. Guerilla tactics coupled with adventuresomeness and a vague recognition of a common interest serve the purpose more satisfactorily. This state of affairs is consonant with the tactics and policies of the I. W. W. Membership or sympathy with it is a sufficient tie for these sporadic outbreaks of floating labour.⁵

⁵ Parker, *The Casual Labourer*; Speck, “Autobiographies of Floating Labourers”, in Commons, *Trade Unionism and Labour Problems* (second series), chap. vii; Mittelman, “The Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen”, *Journal of Political Economy*, June, 1923.

It is significant that the International Seamen's Union and the International Longshoremen's Association are the only conservative unions that are still successfully harassed by the I. W. W. Since 1912 the Seamen's Union has been forced to contend with I. W. W. defectionists within its jurisdiction. Both on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts the I. W. W. has at various times played havoc with certain branches of the Seamen's Union. It has not, however, succeeded in completely replacing it in any centre. And the Seamen's Union is not concerned with combating and expelling communists, which seems to be the concern of so many other unions, but is still absorbed in ridding itself of I. W. W. adherents.⁶ The International Longshoremen's Association is also still encountering effective I. W. W. incursions. Neither seafaring nor longshore work is as characteristically migratory as agriculture, logging and railroad construction. Both pursuits, however, are largely seasonal and casual and the need for water transport workers to live on board ship gives these occupations many of the characteristics of the other business pursuits relying on migratory labour. Large numbers of the workers habitually drift from one occupation to another. In this manner the I. W. W. followers, being also migratory workers, constantly inject themselves into the jurisdictions of the seamen's and longshoremen's unions.

⁶ Albrecht, *The International Seamen's Union of America*, chap. vii, Bul. U. S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, No. 342; Taylor, *Sailors' Union of the Pacific*, pp. 142-146, 170-171.

XI. I. W. W. PROPAGANDA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

THE very characteristics that contributed to the failure of the I. W. W. as a trade union enhanced its achievements as a propaganda organisation. It moulded the thought of large numbers of immigrant and other unskilled workers, introducing them to political and social ideals and converting them to radicalism and dual unionism. So successful was it in this work that even where its former followers repudiated it they nevertheless retained its ideology and prejudices, finding fault only with its policies and tactics. Notwithstanding the present overwhelming boring from within sentiment the organised workers in centres of previous I. W. W. activity and influence have so far failed to take any steps towards merging with the unions of the American Federation of Labour which claim jurisdiction over them. Similarly the independent unions to which those workers belong are revolutionary in philosophy and industrial in form.

Another authentic gauge of the influence of the I. W. W. upon the attitudes of the immigrant workers is the reaction of officials of A. F. of L. unions. The president of an international union operating in an industry consisting of over eighty per cent. immigrant workers explained that his union had ceased organising immigrants. In their experience newly organised immigrant workers were generally abducted by the I. W. W. By continuing the organising of immigrants this union would be placed in the anomalous position of acting as a recruiting agency for the I. W. W. In order to indicate the firmness with which his union held to its policy he related their reaction to an offer of an influential Greek doctor to organise five thousand of his compatriots in one of the largest centres coming under the jurisdiction of this international. After

surveying the field the officers of this union concluded that over half of the Greeks might be I. W. W. adherents and sympathisers. Launching an organising campaign under such circumstances they feared would only stimulate a counter move by the I. W. W. Not caring to stir a smouldering fire the offer of assistance was graciously declined.

The president of an international union in another industry with a considerable percentage of immigrant workers, when asked as to the advisability of issuing foreign language literature explaining A. F. of L. principles, replied sardonically that it would merely give "the immigrant agitators" a better opportunity to hold these principles up to ridicule among their fellow countrymen. To the suggestion that young, intelligent immigrants be trained in A. F. of L. principles so that they could be sent out to familiarise their fellow countrymen, he retorted that it would be useless since he had found that immigrant workers have no confidence in any one connected with or representing the Federation. Even if these trained foreign language organisers remained loyal to the A. F. of L. they would only meet with scorn from the great run of immigrant workers.

Practically all the union leaders interviewed in 1919 whose unions operated in industries where the I. W. W. had been active had abandoned hope of counteracting it. Indeed, they did practically nothing to meet its attacks or stem its progress. Invariably they attributed their inability to organise and hold immigrant workers to the meddling of self-seeking "intellectuals" and "agitators" of the same race. The rank and file immigrant workers were a good lot, but they followed bad leaders.

This abdication by the A. F. of L. unions largely accounts for the widespread radicalism among the immigrant workers in unorganised, industrial centres. By withdrawing they virtually gave the I. W. W. and other radicals a clear field in which to spread their propaganda and make whatever accusations that suited their fancy

against the Federation. Should the bulk of existing unions continue their present policy of neglecting the Negro workers it is highly probable that the communists will corral them as did the I. W. W. with the unorganised immigrant workers; for with the notable exception of a few international unions the communists are the only labour element manifesting a sympathetic interest in the trials and tribulations of the colored workers.

This acknowledgment by the A. F. of L. unions of their inability to compete with the I. W. W. in organising immigrant workers where it had concentrated its propaganda and supplied leadership during strikes is a better index to its accomplishments in moulding the thought of immigrants than is its meagre membership of 30,000—more or less. Achievements of propaganda organisations cannot be gauged by membership. Witness the partial success of the single taxers in this country, or that of the Fabians and more recently that of the Guild Socialists in England with but a handful of members. The secret of success for a propaganda organisation is a select group of individuals with initiative, intelligence, and militancy. Such organisations must bring together a group of evangelists who can inspire and proselytise—in short, what the I. W. W. terms a “militant minority”. Propaganda organisations are primarily interested in cultivating ideas and sentiments and, if at all successful, extend their influence far beyond the narrow bounds of membership. With them membership is naturally highly selective. Those joining must subscribe to their tenets and understand their aims, and since a propaganda organisation offers no immediate return only the faithful persist as members. Practical or realistic organisations indiscriminately strive for a large membership and institutionalisation in order to discipline and hold it. Only trouble makers are disciplined. Non-believers who are in good financial standing and do not threaten control through assertiveness are valued. Seldom do organisations of this class voluntarily purge themselves of inactive or indifferent members. (This

generalisation applies to the general run of churches, as well as to unions, but not to evangelical sects or propaganda bodies.) Unions particularly will insist that all workers coming under their jurisdiction become affiliated with them. Thereafter, they show little concern for the views and opinions of their members, but these must pay their dues regularly and otherwise abide by the rules and regulations. As for propaganda organisations, however, while they differ in their methods and aims, they have a basic characteristic in common—inculcation of ideas and sentiments. To the Fabians and Guild Socialists, chiefly concerned in converting mentally disciplined persons strategically situated, intellectualistic methods were feasible and desirable. With the I. W. W., which aspired to win the masses and their immediate leaders, emotionalistic, mass propaganda through strikes, free-speech fights and other demonstrations, supplemented by popularised literature was the essential technique.

That the I. W. W. did not succeed in becoming a stable organisation and did not function on trade union lines is no indictment of its propaganda effectiveness. Propaganda bodies harvest their crop only when they either become realistic or act as feeders to practical organisations. Thus most religious denominations profit by the use of special evangelistic adjuncts. The British Labour Party garnered the fruits of the Independent Labour Party, the Fabian, and the Guild Socialist agitations. The American Federation of Labour reaped the crops sown by the National Labour Union and the Knights of Labour. And the independent unions described heretofore are an outgrowth of the I. W. W. Outside of the I. W. W. and the communists the American labour movement has virtually discarded its propagandist features. This limitation in part explains its inability to cope with the problem of organising the workers in large scale and trustified portions of industry.

For winning the disillusioned and unorganised masses, the propaganda methods of the I. W. W. were unsur-

passed. Transplanted from a communal, agricultural environment, smarting under the yoke of rampant industrialism, disappointed because of unrealised dreams of instant wealth and comfort, ostracised and scorned, totally ignorant of the intricacies of the capitalist system and of the niceties of trade unionism, they must have inarticulately yearned for a saviour who would urge them to rise in their might and smite their giant oppressor, simultaneously ushering in an ideal social order. The I. W. W. stood ready to accomplish that miracle. Not sensing or sympathising with the mood and temperament of the discomfited immigrants, the A. F. of L. and other established unions counselled patience and compromise. Neither the I. W. W. nor the regular unions succeeded in permanently holding the confidence of these workers because they failed to reconcile those two apparently mutually contradictory methods—evangelicism and practical unionism. The United Mine Workers and the socialist needle trades unions demonstrated that these methods could be co-ordinated; hence their success with immigrant and unskilled workers.

Similar methods were used in organising the steel and packing house workers. Those campaigns resembled revival meetings—bands, parades and silver-tongued orators who could conjure up in bold relief the disappointments and privations of the masses and the need for action. Nothing, or little, was said about the interests of the different crafts, about trade agreements, rights of employers and other matter-of-fact and complicated affairs. Inexperienced and undisciplined workers do not readily grasp the importance of negotiating with employers, of abiding by trade agreements, and of administrative and routine matters. Such ideas must be inculcated by gradual and painstaking education, so that they will unconsciously grow upon those untutored in union policies and tactics. Organisations and leaders who succeed in winning the confidence of their followers and who devise proper disciplinary machinery find it comparatively simple to create

traditions and attitudes sanctioning technical trade union procedure even though the members do not fully grasp its significance. But for the unskilled who possess no trade and craft pride an emotional appeal through picturesque phraseology of a Messianic colouring is essential. Its effect is as electrifying and consoling to the disillusioned, mundane-paradise-seeking workers, as the inspired words of the Bible are to the despondent faithful.

It is not exclusively the immigrant worker who is inspired by this form of propaganda. Native Americans similarly circumstanced have responded as readily to I. W. W. exhortations. This fact was illustrated in the temporary success of the I. W. W. in the southern cotton-mill centres, as well as in the turpentine and timber and lumber camps. The 1910 "uprising" of the Texas and Louisiana forest and lumber mill workers, which outshadowed in turbulence any of the great strikes of immigrant workers, is a case in point. The majority of the workers, and especially the most active, were natives of this forest country whose ancestors had inhabited it for several generations. They had come to look upon the forests as their heritage. About 1900, business interests decided to exploit this natural resource and sent prospectors into the forests to estimate the yield. Suspicious of intruders, the native inhabitants, who lived upon the forests by hunting and fishing, as well as by selling wood and other forest products to neighbouring towns, kept the prospectors out by occasionally sniping off a few. But modern business has far superior tactics. By winning over some of the native leaders it succeeded in establishing itself. As a peace offering the most skilled and lucrative jobs were parcelled out to the original inhabitants. These primitive forest people seem to have accepted the new scheme of things with misgivings. Deep in their hearts they nourished the grudge of the dispossessed and conquered. Evidently they aspired to throw off the yoke of "wage slavery" and regain their former domain. As the discontent crystallised an independent timber workers'

union was founded and enthusiastically supported by the rank and file. The leaders were natives of the locality. The membership, too, consisted of native Americans, who could understand and speak English, and the majority could read it. In the course of time the question of affiliation with a national labour movement presented itself. The A. F. of L. side was presented simultaneously with that of the I. W. W., since English was the common tongue. The leaders of the timber workers were an intelligent and competent lot of men, while the rank and file were alert and equal in intelligence to any American trade unionist. Unlike the majority of the immigrant workers, these timber workers had no previous contact with the A. F. of L. A unanimous verdict was rendered in favour of the I. W. W. (It is significant to bear in mind that forest and lumber workers in this area are not migratory workers, logging goes on the year round.)

In affiliating with the I. W. W. these southern forest and lumber workers seem to have been prompted by motives similar to those which actuated the immigrant workers. Primitive forest people suddenly transformed into routinised and poorly-paid wage workers found their new life too distasteful for ready acceptance. Naturally, they sought to wreak vengeance upon, and, if possible, destroy, the octopus that bound them to it. Wages, hours, conditions of work, trade agreements and compromise with employers, meant an acceptance of the status quo, slightly altered to be sure. This arrangement might appeal to workers who through bitter experience had become resigned to their lot, but to the uninitiated even the radicalism of the A. F. of L. socialist unions was too mild. They burned to overthrow their lords and masters and would brook no delay.

The daring and magnetic personalities of the I. W. W. leaders perhaps more than its principles led them to feel that this organisation was the Moses that would lead them out of the wilderness. Even many of the farmers and local merchants became its adherents. They were of

the same stock as the forest and lumber workers and felt similarly aggrieved at the "intruders". They also yearned to chastise and perhaps dispossess the new owners and "exploiters". In other communities they would have been members of radical farmer organisations. Here they saw the I. W. W. as the source of their salvation.

The 1910 Texas and Louisiana forest and lumber strike was one of the most violent in the annals of the American labour movement. It equalled the 1877 railroad strikes, and the Knights of Labour eight-hour strikes of the middle 'eighties. Pitched battles were fought, lives lost, and property destroyed. The strike was a disastrous failure, but when the writer visited those sections as late as 1914 he found the more active workers still undaunted and loyal to the I. W. W. Yet there was no semblance of organisation except socialist locals in the larger towns. Here, as elsewhere, the I. W. W. failed to capitalise its prestige by forming stable unions.¹

a. Propaganda Under Guise of Trade Union Action

When the I. W. W. was at its crest of power and prestige, the late Professor Hoxie predicted its failure. He based his conclusions on its inability to develop stability, characterising it as a "symptom" rather than an organisation.² Professor Brissenden in his scholarly *History of the I. W. W.* (pp. 305-319) also indicated as early as 1916 that it consisted of a fluctuating membership. The field study pursued by the writer supplements their findings by indicating the practices which made for I. W. W. failure as a trade union or economic organisation, except among migratory workers, but which contributed to its astounding success as a propaganda organisation. This characteristic has been underestimated and its propaganda achievement not sufficiently appreciated because the I. W. W. was judged exclusively by standards applicable

¹ Saposs, *Company Owned Towns* (unpublished report prepared for the United States Commission on Industrial Relations, in files of the Wisconsin State Historical Library, Madison, Wis.).

² *Trade Unionism in the U. S.*, chap. vi.

to unions or practical mass organisations ministering primarily to the immediate needs of their membership. For such organisations the criterion of success is the extent to which they attain "stability", evidences of which are a large membership, a proportionately substantial treasury, and other material accumulations. But propaganda bodies, chiefly dedicated to the dissemination of sentiments and ideas may exercise far-reaching emotional and intellectual influence with a small membership and little material opulence. Whether or not the leaders were aware of it, their policies and tactics definitely stamp the I. W. W. as a propaganda organisation. This fact helps to explain the small size and fluctuating character of its membership, the insignificance of its treasury, and its general instability. It also accounts for the inability to win seceding A. F. of L. unions, or to cut into the membership of existing unions. And it is also the reason why the I. W. W. rarely undertook to organise the unorganised, merely leading their spontaneous strikes and, upon termination of them, abandoning the workers to their own resources.

It seems hardly likely that the I. W. W. revolutionary, syndicalist philosophy was a vitally determining factor in its scorn for stability. The European syndicalists have developed stable and effective economic organisations that minister to the immediate needs of their followers. It seems that the I. W. W. leaders stressed those syndicalistic tenets that were mostly effective in propagating their ultimate aims. As a result strikes were in their eyes regarded chiefly as a means of furthering propaganda. Hence their interest in leading strikes, but contempt for building up unions. Again, it seems erroneous to contend that the struggle between the centralisers and decentralisers (the latter are credited with injecting syndicalistic policies and tactics) materially coloured the I. W. W. outlook. Many of the successful unions are highly decentralised. Moreover, it is a mistake to assume that those leaders who advocated centralisation and were supported by the industrial and eastern membership aimed

at stability in the sense of directing the I. W. W. to function on trade union lines. Perhaps their industrialist followers desired centralisation in order to develop unions that would foster their immediate interests. On the other hand, it is established that the leaders who sponsored centralisation discouraged all policies and tactics that would make for effective trade union action and organisation. Their words and actions reveal the fact that they were chiefly interested in the ultimate revolution. To them the prime mission of the I. W. W. was to sow the seed among the "militant minority", who would serve as lieutenants in the future class revolt. From this approach, the objective of a strike is not the immediate gain in higher wages, shorter hours or improvements in other working conditions. Such betterments are only a necessary sop for the thoughtless rank and file. Immediate demands must be dangled before their eyes in order to humour them, but the real purpose of strikes is to train the militants in leadership, as well as to drill the future soldiers (the workers) in the science of revolutionary action. Frequent strikes, like numerous drills and military manœuvres for an army, are essential in order that the workers may not lose their fighting spirit. Thus, trade agreements, strike funds, closed shop, benefit features and other provisions for holding the inert mass are taboo. Such appendages minimise the strike and relegate revolutionary ideas to the background by keeping conservative methods to the fore. They would tend to institutionalise and hence stabilise the organisation. An organisation of the "militant minority" with a discontented and untamed rank and file, trained to strike on the slightest provocation—that was the ideal, even of the centralisers of the East.

Resort to subterfuge by the I. W. W. leaders is not an unusual procedure. All organisations and persons aiming to advance a cause that may not meet with complete popular approval are wont to employ such deceptive tactics. In the case of the I. W. W. these tactics proved its un-

doing in the industrial centres. By deliberately discouraging stability and yet pretending to protect the immediate interests of its followers it gambled away its opportunity of permanently holding the mass of immigrant and unorganised workers in many of the so-called large-scale and trustified plants. That these workers are organisable and amenable to discipline is evidenced by the experience of the United Mine Workers and of the needle trades unions. It was disregard of the daily economic needs of such workers that cost the I. W. W. loss of prestige in the industrial centres. The masses and local leaders considered it a radical trade union, and not an organisation exclusively furthering propaganda through direct action of sporadic and spontaneous strikes and free speech fights, both of which naturally presented unexcelled opportunity for spectacular mass propaganda.

The I. W. W. die was cast considerably before it came into contact with the immigrant industrial elements. The controversies and struggles for control within the organisation gradually eliminated the elements that aspired to organise the workers into radical, industrial unions. Within the first two years it had lost the only two substantial units affiliated with it—Western Federation of Miners and Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Soon thereafter the “opportunist” socialists, largely members of the Socialist Party, also withdrew. And finally the capture of the organisation by the “bummery” or migratory elements, who suspected anything savouring of authority or stability, gave control to those leaders who were directing the I. W. W. towards the featuring of tactics and policies possessing propaganda values. This attitude of the leaders was not pure rationalisation; temperamentally the ablest were natural-born evangelists rather than executives or administrators. A factor at least as significant as the others was the need of going to extremes in decrying the realistic methods of its rivals, the A. F. of L. on the economic, and the Socialist Party on the political field (Brissenden, *op. cit.*, chaps vi, vii and ix). Individuals

and organisations frequently jockey themselves into positions which they never intended to occupy when they first became involved in a controversy. Gradually and probably unconsciously the I. W. W. was manoeuvred into a position where it had to attack all practices of its two outstanding rivals. The purely propagandist element had gotten the upper hand and was in undisputed control before the immigrant industrialists attracted its attention. The latter, unacquainted with union tactics and policies, followed its leadership until they discovered its inherent failings, whereupon they either became indifferent or repudiated it outright. The rapid decline of the I. W. W. shortly following its meteoric rise in immigrant industrial centres is attributable to its innate urge to propagandise at the expense of stability, rather than to its syndicalistic doctrines or its lack of centralisation or the fact that it was a dual union.

As has heretofore been indicated, the I. W. W. at present functions chiefly among migratory workers. Its paid up membership is barely 10,000 and it is torn by internal strife. Within the past two years it has been experiencing bitter factional quarrels which have even led one group to resort to the courts, procuring an injunction against its rivals. In the Fall of 1924 a convention held continuous sessions for a month in the effort to unite the warring factions, but failed. From accounts of its last convention held in November, 1925, and attended only by eleven delegates, the breach remains unhealed. Consequently, at present the I. W. W. has to contend with dualism in two of its largest industrial unions. It is difficult to determine the outcome at this writing; nor is it clear from available data what fundamental issues precipitated this destructive controversy. It would seem that its present predicament is largely attributable to a quarrel among the comparatively mediocre leaders that have been guiding the destinies of the I. W. W. since the World War. At any rate it does not show any evidence of regaining its former influence and prestige.

XII. PERSISTENCE OF DUAL UNIONISM

Is the pendulum of radical union tactics swinging again in the direction of dual unionism? The communists continue staunchly to denounce the philosophy of dual unionism. "The fight against dual unionism and secession was one of the main features of the meeting of the executive bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions. . . . It was made quite clear that no dual unionism will be tolerated, as this evil has proved disastrous to the labour movement" ("R. I. L. U. Hammers Dual Unionism on Solar Plexus", *The Daily Worker*, June 5, 1925). In this country the Trade Union Educational League was instrumental in forestalling a number of dual union undertakings. Notable among these were the situations in the Kansas and Nova Scotia coal fields and in the packing industry. At present they are straining every bit of influence to avert dualism in some of the needle trades unions. Conditions in these and other unions are such as would in the past have resulted in dual union attempts, but the new spirit decrying dual unionism has prevented such development at present.

The sudden shift from dualism in spite of its powerful hold on the revolutionary radicals is indicative of the influence of counter-suggestion promulgated from an authoritative source. Although radical dual unions were generally not a success the revolutionary radicals had held tenaciously to the idea of dualism. Then followed the spectacular and unexampled Bolshevik revolution which captivated their imagination. Communism became the source of revelation and inspiration. Consequently when the communists pronounced against dual unionism, like a flash the new sacred principle took hold. Since then not only have attempts at founding dual unionism ceased in this country, but to advocate dualism is regarded as sacrilege.

But hardly had the communists gotten on full steam when circumstances forced them to modify their inexorable dictum against dual unions. Even the radical dual unions with communist leanings objected to being "liquidated" and turned over to the mercy of their conservative rivals.¹ To meet this situation the Trade Union Educational League explained that when it called upon dual unions to disband, it merely referred to "paper" dual unions. On the other hand, it recognises "the present importance of the independent unions and their probable much greater importance in the future."²

On this basis the independent unions not subscribing to the Trade Union Educational League are being subjected to boring from within on the same basis as the A. F. of I. unions. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union is at present experiencing as much communist opposition as any other union, and as a result of this friction it, too, has indulged in expulsions. Not even the I. W. W. has escaped communist attention; but Tom Mann's exhortation that it cease functioning as a dual union is not featured. Evidently appreciating that the I. W. W. has a definite economic function to perform in certain industries, the communists have been exceedingly energetic in their attempts to capture and rehabilitate it. They have injected themselves into every internal controversy and in addition have attempted to introduce new issues. Since the I. W. W. is wildly split by factional strife and is a mere shadow of its former self the communists have presented a program of action and policies for reforming the organisation. It is their opinion that the I. W. W. has fallen into the same rut and is suffering from the same ills that they attribute to the conservative unions.

¹ "Liquidation" of the Independent Unions and Why We Oppose It; pamphlet issued by the Amalgamated Metal Workers of America, June, 1922.

² "The Program for the T. U. E. L.", in *The Labour Herald*, July, 1924.

"Today, with several mutually hostile anarcho-syndicalist groups wrangling over petty constitutional quibbles, there exists no group, except the adherents of the Red International, to formulate and advocate a program of action around which the censored, disfranchised rank and file may rally to re-establish the I. W. W. as a vigorous and revolutionary economic organisation with a future better than its past. . . . Just as in these other organisations [conservative and opportunist-radical unions], so in the I. W. W. the hope of progress lies in the propagation and adoption by the rank and file of a left wing programme of action, and the raising of every point of such a programme as an issue in every discussion on organisation policy; particularly by the demand of the rank and file, whether of individuals or groups, from every nominee for responsible office in the I. W. W., a statement of his stand upon each point of such a programme of action. . . ." ("Red International Proposes Program of Action for I. W. W.", *The Daily Worker*, June 9, 1925).

Not only are the communists interested in the general problems of the I. W. W., but they have taken a keen interest in its several industrial unions. The Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union has particularly attracted their attention. In a statement to the migratory workers they paternally chide the I. W. W. for failing to size up properly the situation in the harvest fields and for applying, in consequence, faulty tactics. Accordingly they call upon the "hundreds of communists or communist sympathisers, all supporters of the Red International of Labour Unions", who will be "among the thousands who will ride the freight trains, gather in the jungles and sweat in the fields this summer" to "support the Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union of the I. W. W." by joining it "if possible before reaching the harvest and spread its propaganda for harvest workers. They must help the delegates to organise, actively giving militant assistance and leading the fight against the timidity and indifference of the masses. When eligible they themselves must become delegates. . . . Communists and Red Internationalists must not only build the Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union of the I. W. W., but must inspire and direct it in the struggle. . . . Communists and Red Inter-

nationalists must combat the non-revolutionary propaganda of the anarchist element, must demand the end of censorship in the I. W. W. press against members who are communists and supporters of the Red International of Labour Unions, must uphold the proletarian dictatorship, the Soviet government, and continuously advocate the affiliation of the I. W. W. to the Red International of Labour Unions".³

The boring from within ideal has been modified by other developments. The most ardent disciples of the Trade Union Educational League are being expelled from some of the most important unions. These unions also debar communist adherents from holding any official positions. To meet this predicament the Trade Union Educational League has declared that the "expelled members shall endeavour to fight their way back into the old organisation, except in such cases where the best course is plainly to form a new organisation" ("The Programme for the T. U. E. L.", *The Labour Herald*, July, 1924). Thus far this latter edict has not been acted upon. However, it is a specific acknowledgment that there might be limitations to boring from within, in which case the natural course would be the formation of separate or rival unions.

From the standpoint of the position of the unorganised, the boring from within policy again presents disadvantages. The radicals have always been concerned about the predicament of the unorganised and the neglect of their interests. They have urged special consideration for this group of workers. At present some of the most important industries, such as steel, packing, and so on, are unorganised. The revolutionary radicals maintain that the unions claiming jurisdiction over these workers are indifferent. They also are beginning to realise that it

³ "Going to the Harvest? Then Join the I. W. W.", statement by the Red International Affiliation Committee, in *The Daily Worker*, July 1, 1924; see also "Make A. W. I. U. [Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union] a Real Union, Is Call of Red International Committee to Harvest Workers", in *The Daily Worker*, June 5, 1925.

will be too devious a course for them to first capture these unions and then use their machinery in organising the unorganised. Hence in its instructions to subordinate units the Trade Union Educational League requires them "to support the foundation of new unions whenever practical . . ." (*Ibid.*).

These modifications have naturally laid the way open for dual unionism under certain extenuating circumstances. It is quite probable that conditions may make it advisable for the communists and their collaborators to resort to dualism in certain cases. There is no doubt that they will not countenance the formation of "paper" dual unions. Nor will they encourage dual unions where boring from within is feasible even though difficult (see "Green's Green Goods", *The Daily Worker*, Sept. 9, 1925). But where a mass constituency is available, ready to follow their leadership, they will very likely undertake to form separate unions when the other alternative has been exhausted. This has been the procedure in other countries. Thus in France, where the communists have a large rank and file following, independent communist unions were formed.

"Sad disruption has come into the ranks of French labour. A definite split occurred between the right and left wings of the trade union movement. . . . To defeat the rapidly growing [revolutionary radicals] . . . the old bureaucracy began to expel local unions connected with it. . . . Things went from bad to worse, with the revolutionaries trying desperately to stay in the unions and the reactionaries to expel them. . . . With the unshakable determination to drive the radicals out even if they had also to expel the majority of the whole labour movement that is lined up with them, they refused conciliation. . . . As things now stand, there are practically two distinct labour movements in France, one radical, and the other conservative. . . . It is factional war to the knife. . . ." ⁴

Germany has witnessed a like occurrence.

"The communists and syndicalists have of late had increasing success. The Communist Party, it is true, was not in

⁴ *The Labour Herald*, March, 1922, pp. 28-29; April, 1922, p. 28.

favour of special communist unions, but wanted the communists to stay in the Social-Democratic (free) unions and conquer them. But when communist members were excluded from Social-Democratic Unions those members created a few of their own, and these new organisations founded the Federation of Manual and Non-manual German Workers, numbering about 160,000 members. Unlike the Communist Party, the Communist Labour Party is in favour of special communist unions and backs the General Federation of German Workers, which so far, however, has not many adherents. . . ."⁵

Certain signs point to a similar development of a substantial and co-ordinated dual movement in this country. From the foregoing analysis it would seem that the support for such a dual union movement would come from three sources. In the first place, the expulsions and other critical and uncompromising developments in certain unions may force a separation as these factors did in Europe. The persistent expulsions make it well-nigh impossible for the communists to work within some unions. As long as the communists do not have an extensive following they can content themselves with "underground" boring from within. As soon as they can exercise influence they naturally must come to the surface. Even though they do not openly label themselves they must nevertheless declare themselves on issues and support the communist activities. Unless they did this they could not hold the confidence of the rank and file and would be of little value to the cause. In mass movements it is difficult to work underground and exercise influence on behalf of a philosophy or a minority cause that attempts to educate the masses to support its ideology. Hence the more active followers and leaders are bound to expose themselves sooner or later. Then the expulsion axe falls. If they have a large following and are perhaps in control of some locals, they are bound to resist. With the highly centralised power vested in the Internationals as the

⁵ Kuczynski, *Post-War Labour Conditions in Germany*, Bulletin No. 380, 1925, Bureau of Labour Statistics, p. 82.

dominant organs in the labour movement, the communists are inevitably at a disadvantage in the struggle. Many of their number are already chafing under the restraint that requires standing up and taking punishment from a heavier and more advantageously situated opponent. To these avowed militants and revolutionists this policy smacks considerably of Christ's pacifist injunction to turn the other cheek. This element demands a divorce rather than an incompatible marriage with a "brutal" husband.

Occurrences in some of the needle trades unions illustrate both the possibilities and the difficulties of resisting ruthless expulsions, and at the same time satisfying the zealous followers whose feelings and emotions are taxed to capacity. In the International Ladies' Garment Workers' and International Fur Workers' Unions the communists in alliance with other administration critics pursued open hostilities in spite of the consistent expulsion of leading members of their group. Notwithstanding that expulsions became a periodic event in these unions, the anti-administration forces dominated by the communists retained a sufficient following within the unions to enable them to carry on the fight. The climax in the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union came in the Spring of 1925 when the General Executive Board expelled the officers and other leaders of three of the largest New York local unions. Feeling that they had a substantial membership behind them, the expelled leaders refused to submit. Instead they undertook to organise their following against the International and Joint Board officials. (The Joint Board in the needle trades unions is the co-ordinating body of the local unions in a given manufacturing centre.) They established a Joint Action Committee with separate headquarters through which they carried on a systematic campaign against the expulsion policy of the International and Joint Board officials. They advised the members of the local unions to repudiate the officials by not paying dues. Similarly in the shops controlled by the expelled leaders the union book was not recognised. Workers were

required to carry a card issued by the Joint Action Committee. Shop strikes were called when the followers of the expelled leaders were discriminated against. The manufacturers, who were negotiating an agreement with the International and Joint Board officials were warned that it would not be recognised. Finally a two-hour general strike of the workers in the industry was called in order to demonstrate to the manufacturers and the union administration that the Joint Action Committee of the expelled leaders was in a position to fulfill its threats. Of course, this procedure bordered on the point of secession. Simultaneously the sentiment for dual unionism was assuming irresistible momentum. However, the more impulsive were held in leash. But had not the resistance of the communists and their allies brought the administration to terms it is quite likely that their provisional organisation for fighting their way back into the union would have metamorphosed into a separate union. In that event the dissident groups in the Fur Workers' Union would in all probability have emulated the course of the opposition in the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Only a victory in both unions prevented the fruition of dual unionism in the needle trades.

Overwhelming mass support in New York, the strategic centre of both trades, turned the trick. In the Fur Workers' Union the anti-administration group is in undisputed control of the New York Joint Board, comprising the majority membership in the International Union. Although this element was not in control of the International convention held in Boston during November, 1925, the administration was replaced by neutrals, including, however, a small representation on the General Executive Board of anti-administration leaders. One of the new General Executive Board members, who is also the manager of the New York Joint Board, is an avowed communist. In the case of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' the administration openly acknowledged the defeat of its expulsionist policy. In New York,

on the intervention of a committee of shop chairmen, it agreed to a truce at the same time reinstating the expelled officers and members. Likewise new elections were ordered in which the expelled group was permitted to participate. The outcome was a decisive victory for the anti-administration forces. Subsequently the administration advised its followers to resign their official Joint Board positions in favour of the leaders of the expelled group. One of the conditions of the peace provided that the date of the biennial convention be advanced six months in order to adjust the controversial issues. Consequently the convention assembled November 30, 1925, in Philadelphia. It lasted three weeks—one week longer than normal conventions—and was one of the stormiest in the history of the American labour movement. Both sides bitterly and ably contested every inch of ground. The various grievances and differences of opinion were thoroughly aired. The anti-administration forces by controlling the New York delegation and that of some of the large locals from other centres represented the majority of the members. They were, however, outvoted by the administration forces since the representation to conventions is not entirely apportioned according to membership. Because of this the voting strength of the many small locals with a minority membership is greater than that of the few large locals in the important manufacturing centres. Because it is customary that the large locals be represented on the General Executive Board the administration permitted four of the vice-presidencies to be filled from the anti-administration forces. Three of them are former victims of the expulsion policy. It was also decided, in accordance with the conditions of the peace terms, to refer to the membership for decision as to whether or not the present basis of representation be so altered that locals receive representation more nearly in proportion to their membership.

The outcome of the internal strife in these two needle trades unions registers a victory for the communists and

their allies by reversing the previous expulsion policy. The decisiveness of their victory is further attested to by the election of some of the expelled leaders to the important Joint Board's official positions, as well as to membership on the General Executive Boards. In so far as the political situation in the Fur Workers' and Ladies' Garment Workers' Unions shapes itself it would seem that expulsion as a disciplinary measure for communists and their allies has been definitely repudiated. President Green of the American Federation of Labour seems to have endorsed this change in policy in his address to the delegates of the Ladies' Garment Workers' convention. Whether he would counsel a similar procedure for the entire labour movement is not clear from his remarks on this subject, which were in part as follows :

"I am liberal enough to respect the opinion and judgment of every man. I think I can be classed as a radical many times and I have no quarrel with a member of our union who may be classified as a radical. In fact, I am glad to see that spirit manifest itself. I would rather see that alive in every organisation than I would to see it dried up with dry rot. I learn a great deal from those who express these progressive ideas. We need them in our movement. They are the salt of the earth because many times they inspire us to action and to service.

"But my friends, let us bear this in mind that in respecting the judgment and the opinion of those who may be properly classified as being ultra-progressive, and in telling you that you have as much place in our movement as any one else, we ask in return that you must respect the judgment and opinion of those who may not seem to see the thing as you see it. It is upon this basis of reciprocal relationship that we can make progress. Let us, like a family, thrash out our differences within our own councils, and let us not carry our differences to the street, thereby adding to the pleasure of those who would oppose us.

"And, while we are thrashing out our differences, let the majority rule, for this, after all, is the most democratic institution in the world. Here is where the majority rules and when the majority have decided an issue, it is the duty of the minority to support the expressed wish of the majority. If you forget what I have said, if the advice I have given you

is not remembered, may I ask that you will never forget as you look into my face the earnestness with which I appeal to you" (*Report of Proceedings of the Eighteenth Convention of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union*, Sixth Day, pp. 11-13).

Because of this successful resistance to the expulsion policy in the two needle trades unions, the communists are redoubling their boring from within efforts in the other unions. Their expelled followers are more emphatically counselled against dual union attempts in areas where an existing union functions fairly effectively. Instead they are urged to emulate their comrades of the Fur Workers' and Ladies' Garment Workers' unions in fighting their way back into the unions. It would seem, therefore, that secessions from existing unions because of expulsions may not prove an important feeder in the probable revival of radical dual unionism.

The other two sources should prove very fertile soil for the formation of separate communist unions. It will be recalled that in the heyday of the I. W. W. its greatest following came from the unorganised workers. This source offers at present equal opportunity. The unorganised in the trustified portions of industry are still with us. President Green of the American Federation of Labour is urging the various affiliated unions to make a special effort in order to enlist these workers under its banner. Whoever reaches these inarticulate unorganised masses first during a crisis, however, generally holds their confidence permanently. The communists have been carrying on extensive propaganda among the unorganised, especially immigrant, Negroes and unskilled workers. In this respect they are also repeating the course followed by the I. W. W. At crucial periods they will have their staunch followers strategically placed; and when a spontaneous strike or other difficulty arises they are bound to be influential. Their advice will very likely be given serious consideration. That the communists are fully cognisant of the opportunities the unorganised offer for furthering

their cause is evident from the following excerpt of one of their official declarations:

"It is exactly those workers in highly mechanised industries who, because of the conditions under which they work, will respond to communist influences who are in the ranks of the unorganised. The conditions existing in the United States so far as the trade unions are concerned is to a considerable degree parallel to the conditions which existed in Great Britain a quarter of a century ago. There, too, a highly reactionary trade union bureaucracy was in control of the trade unions and opposed all progressive measures in the struggles against the employers. It was only with the advent of the 'new unionism' which came into existence through the organisation of great masses of previously unorganised workers that the trade unions changed their policy and the labour party was formed and industrial unionism developed" ("The Industrial Work of the Workers' Party", *The Daily Worker*, July 29, 1925).

Already the communists have duplicated the rôle of the I. W. W. in either leading or actively participating in spontaneous strikes of the unorganised. Two outstanding instances are the recent unorganised strike in the Connellsville coke region and the Pressed Steel Car Co. strike at McKees Rocks. In neither case have they attempted to perpetuate the temporary strike organisation under their leadership and control. Other industries offer equal possibilities. If these caterings to the unorganised should materialise in the communists' being entrusted with leadership or called in as counsellors, two factors may make it necessary for them to encourage these workers to maintain separate unions. With the temporary strike organisation under communist influence or domination, the existing unions may not be too anxious to accept the new recruits. In that event there may be no choice for the communists but to attempt to hold these workers in independent unions. As the conflict grows more intense and each side abandons toleration, the communists may change their attitude. They may feel that turning over newly organised workers who have turned to them for counsel and guidance to the

unions that will not permit communists as members is not the wisest of tactics. One alternative would be to permit the workers to disband, and the other would be to turn them over to the enemies of the communists. If such a situation should arise the declaration of the Trade Union Educational League "to support the foundation of new unions where practical . . ." may assume significance.

This analysis is not mere speculation. Instances have arisen where the communists faced the situation as described. To cite one case:

"Between 500 and 600 coal miners employed by the Washington Coal and Coke Co., at the Star Junction, Pa., mine have come out and joined their fellow workers from the two mines owned by the Jamison Coal and Coke Co., at Perryopolis, in a strike against the attempts to reduce wages. . . . These mines are unorganised, left to their own fate after the strike in 1922 by the union officialdom, the same as the rest of the coke region. . . . When the first miners came out a few days ago Board Member Haynes of District Five and Organiser Robertson [officials of the United Mine Workers] appeared to speak to the strikers, but were told that they had better leave as the men, who had been taught a bitter lesson by their former experiences, would not trust them. They left, and the striking miners organised their own strike committee, receiving assistance and guidance from the Progressive Miners' Committee of District Five [a subsidiary unit of The Trade Union Educational League]. . . . Strike meetings are being held regularly and despite the great hostility toward the official representative of the United Mine Workers, dating back to the 1922 betrayals, the need of organisation is being discussed. The progressives . . . are showing the way" ("Miners' Strike Unorganized Coke Region, in *The Daily Worker*, September 22, 1925).

A third factor that may lead the communists to support independent unions is the existence of innumerable dual unions in a number of industries. These independent unions are generally inclined to lean towards the radicals because they are the aggressive and articulate opposition. As detached units they feel the need of at least an intangible national alliance. In the past many of these unions were sympathetic towards the socialists. At pres-

ent they seem to be friendly towards the communists. The criticisms which the communists are making of the American Federation of Labour unions, their rivals, are naturally acceptable to them. The communists are catering to them. They are not advised to disband and surrender their members to the A. F. of L. unions. Instead they are urged to amalgamate where several function in an industry. Then they can make a united demand upon the Federation union as an equal. This is particularly true in the textile and shoe industries. The workers are warned against the "reactionary labour fakers". The communists have even denounced the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union as a "company union" (Johnstone, "Textile Workers Must Have a United Front", *The Daily Worker*, April 2, 1925). This policy of warning dual or independent unions against their A. F. of L. rival is applied with discrimination. Where the communists have a following in an A. F. of L. union or where the union does not discriminate against their followers, they attempt to include it in their amalgamation programme. Thus "the International Bakery and Confectionery Workers affiliated with the American Federation of Labour" is recognised on a parity with its communist rival the Amalgamated Food Workers. "Both are labour unions striving to better the lot of the workers in the baking industry, both are struggling bitterly against the greedy bosses, both are worthy of the support and co-operation of every worker and every workers' organisation." The Trade Union Educational League Bakers' Section commends the co-operation of the local unions of these two organisations. It also warns against rivalry which seems to manifest itself. They "therefore appeal to the organised bakers and to the workers of Coney Island and Brooklyn to put a stop to this war within the organised ranks of union labour in the baking industry". And all are exhorted to "support the bakers' unions by buying union-made bread, no matter whether organised in the International Bakery and Confectionery Workers of

the American Federation of Labour or organised in the Amalgamated Food Workers. Demand the United Front among the Bakers" ("Appeal to Brooklyn Bakers, etc.", *The Daily Worker*, Aug. 22, 1924).

Thus, in some industries at least, the communists encourage the separate amalgamation of the independent unions. If the A. F. of L. unions should persist in unbending or meeting these independent unions at least half-way, the communists and their allies may find it necessary to function as at present. In any event "the present importance of independent unions and their probable much greater importance in the future" may assume vital meaning. Should conditions make it necessary for the communists to follow out their declarations, this country would witness a revival of ideologic dual unionism. No doubt in that event the communists would attempt to co-ordinate the scattered unions controlled or influenced by them into some national organisation somewhat on the lines of procedure in European countries. A nucleus for such an undertaking already exists. "Those unions that are definitely communist (apart from the communist-led minorities in the large unions) are few in number, totalling at most 40,000 members. They are independent of the A. F. of L. and centre chiefly around the United Labour Council of America, with headquarters in New York . . ." (Foster, Cannon and Browder, *Trade Unions in America*, p. 2, Pamphlet No. 1, of *The Little Red Library*).

Should the communists decide to concentrate on the founding of a system of unions under their control, the most fertile sources will probably be the unorganised workers and the weaker independent unions. Some of the recruits may come from the expulsionist unions but unless the communists change their policies radically they will endeavour to forestall this development. On the other hand, if they proceed to organise their following among the unorganised and independent unions into a unified separate movement, it will make it even more difficult to carry on their boring from within. Then they will be

doubly branded as dual unionists. Possibly this issue may divide the communists into two warring camps. Groups have been known to dash at each others' throats when differing over less important issues. Probably the iron communist discipline may prevent a division in their ranks. Should they manage to avert splittings off from existing unions and still encourage those whom they influence among the unorganised and independent unions to maintain themselves in a co-ordinating national body, then the communist-led unions would, like the I. W. W., be functioning in areas not effectively covered by the existing unions. While on the fringes there might be overlapping and guerilla warfare, there would, on the whole, be a division of territory.

The mass of unorganised workers and scattered independent unions inevitably induces a periodic revival of dual unionism on a national basis. The increase of unrest among the unorganised and the consequent spontaneous strikes foreshadow a swing of the pendulum of radicalism towards some form of dualism. Whether these embryo outcroppings will be nourished into mature and effective unions depends on whether the communists will avoid the mistakes of the I. W. W. If they regard these unions merely as a vehicle for propagating their doctrines rather than as agencies that must attend to the daily economic problems of the workers then they will lose the masses and dwindle down to propaganda nuclei. Their allegiance can be retained only by effective disciplinary machinery and tangible current economic benefits and services. The union must not only serve as an emotional outlet. It must touch the daily routine of the worker's life, particularly his shop and industrial problems. Unless the communists demonstrate the knack of co-ordinating the idealistic with the practical their efforts at organising separate unions are certainly doomed to failure.

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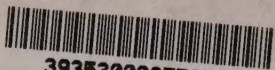
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